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ART-NONSENSE AND OTHER ESSAYS

ART-NONSENSE AND OTHER ESSAYS BY ERIC GILL



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“If man is essentially a tool-using animal, the tool is from the beginning that of the artist, no less than that of the labourer.”

“The starting point of human progress is to be found in the highest type of knowledge—the intuition of pure being . . . man’s development is not so much from the lower to the higher as from the confused to the distinct.”

Christopher Dawson: ‘Progress and Religion’

APOLOGY

TWO primary ideas run through all the essays in this book: that "art is simply the well making of what needs making" and that "art is collaboration with God in creating." Written at various times and for various occasions, I was sometimes moved by the one, sometimes by the other. One essay will appear in consequence to contradict another. This seems unavoidable, but apology is offered for the gymnastics to which the reader is compelled. After all, life is full of these apparent contradictions, and a robust mind is one that is not disturbed thereby.

Apology is also due to those who, being better educated than I in philosophy and theology, will find my errors and presumptions annoying. But few who are trained in philosophy and few who have the cure of souls seem to have any understanding of the job of the artist or a just appreciation of his work. At one time they will treat of art as an entirely negligible thing—fit only for hot-houses and boudoirs—and at another they will place the artist on a pedestal and treat him as a person whose vision of the ultimate is so profound that no ordinary person can come near him. In these morasses the plain notion of art as "making in general" is lost and the making of pots and pans as well as the making of sculptured images is relegated

to commercial enterprise on the one hand and to eccentricity on the other. Therefore, while I apologize for my ignorance and bad temper, I make no apology for my interference. Someone must try and get the matter straight.

Further, I apologize for the occurrence in more than one essay of similar or even identical phrases. Such phrases must be regarded simply as tools; and just as a sculptor will use the same chisels for carving a madonna as he will for carving a cupid, so a writer may be excused if he find such a saying as "*Dilige Deum et fac quod vis*" as useful in an essay on clothes as in one on industrialism.

I apologize also for the fact that whereas in earlier essays I distrusted and disparaged the use of the words ARTIST, ARCHITECTURE, BEAUTY, in later essays I make confident use of them. I have made some attempt to put this matter right in the essay on "The Criterion in Art," where I point out that though beauty is ultimately the criterion for judging all the works of men, nevertheless the proximate criterion is utility. In the earlier essays I was more concerned to extricate the artist from the hot-house of the art-school, whereas in the later I was more concerned to extricate him from the ice-house of an atheistic industrialism. Man is matter and spirit—both real and both good—that is the gist of the matter.

E. G.

March 1929

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SLAVERY AND FREEDOM

THAT state is a state of Slavery in which a man does what he likes to do in his spare time and in his working time that which is required of him. This state can only exist when what a man likes to do is to please himself.

That state is a state of Freedom in which a man does what he likes to do in his working time and in his spare time that which is required of him. This state can only exist when what a man likes to do is to please God.

A man is a slave when between him and God who is the final cause is interposed another man as an efficient cause.

A man is free who is subject only to those causes which are called final. In as much as man is a material body he is subject to efficient cause—as a stone is moved by a kick, i.e. the kick is an efficient cause. In as much as man is a living spirit he is subject to final cause—as when a man and woman are married at a church and not at a registrar's office, i.e. the Church is a final cause.

We are not slaves because we are subject to final causes, but only when we submit to another person as an efficient cause.

The test of a man's freedom is his responsibility as a workman. Freedom is not incompatible with discipline, it is only incompatible with irresponsibility. He who is free is responsible for his work. He who is not responsible for his work is not free.

Efficient management and 'scientific' organization (e.g. the factory or servile system) are certainly conducive to the comfort of the worker (slave) and to his steady employment and security. There is not necessarily anything materially uncomfortable in a state of slavery and there is not necessarily anything materially comfortable in a state of freedom.

That man is by nature free (i.e. by the will of God) is a religious affirmation (i.e. not to be proved—whether by reference to history, which, indeed, might easily be made out to show exactly the contrary, or by any other means). There is nothing to be said against slavery except that it is not the will of God. There is nothing to be said for freedom except that it is the will of God.

The service of God is perfect Freedom.

ESSENTIAL PERFECTION

GOD is Love. That is not to say merely that God is loving or lovable but that he is Love. In this, Love is an absolute not a relative term. The Love of God is man's Essential Perfection. The essential perfection of man is not in his physical functions—the proper material exercise of his organs—but in his worship of God, and the worship of God is perfect in Charity. Man is a created being; therefore his Perfection has relation to his Creator and things made by man have that relation also. The essential perfection of any act of man is in Charity. It is not the essential perfection of man's actions that by them he performs a physical function. "And if I should distribute all my goods to feed the poor, and if I should deliver my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing."

The essential perfection of any work of man is in Charity. The essential perfection of any work of man is not in the excellent performance of its material function. For Charity is the Love of God, and the Love of God is man's proper worship and his essential perfection.

This worship of God which a man displays in his work we call Beauty. Beauty is not to be confused with loveliness. Beauty is absolute, loveliness is relative. It is for the love of God and his worship that a man deals thus justly by the work of his hands. Beauty is not an accidental perfection either of God's creation or of man's handiwork. Beauty is

an Essential Perfection of Creation and of handiwork. Beauty is the Love of God sensible in his work. Beauty is the Love of God and his praise and worship sensible in the work of man's hands.

And "when Charity fully engages the soul, it spurs us on to innumerable good works." A man who for the Love of God has made such a thing as a beautiful watch—beautiful not in its adornment but in the inherent quality of its form—will not be satisfied if the watch will not 'go' or goes badly. He will see that it goes well. This good-going is one of the "innumerable good works" to which Charity spurs him on.

Far other is that thing called ornament or adornment, and often even mis-called Beauty, which is not man's sensible worship of God, but is rather man's worship of himself, as who should say, "I am worthy that this thing should be made comely for me." Yet a man may, if he will, adorn the work of his own hands, if that is his delight and love, for so, for Love, God has adorned the lily of the field.

"And I have found that nothing is better than for a man to rejoice in his work, and that this is his portion." He shall 'rejoice,' as who should say, he shall have it with Love. This is not merely a statement of fact, it is also a command—a command that in labour we show the Love of God.

That a man may show the love of God in his work he must be free. A factory hand may show the love of God in his life or in his thought—he cannot show it in his work. The workman has as much right to make and to act upon

an æsthetic judgement in his work as he has to act upon a moral judgement in his life, or as he has to make an intellectual judgement in his thought. He has also the right to choose the authority to which he will submit in any of the three spheres, but no man has the right to compel his submission. Only God has such a right, and God has given man free will!

The factory workman is a slave. He is a slave not only because in his life he is often bound by the judgements of his master, but because in his work he is always so bound. Such judgements are not those of a father to a son or of a master workman to his journeymen and apprentices. The submission of the factory hand is a submission to the whip—i.e., the 'sack.' He is bound not only in matters relating to the accidental perfection of his work—such binding is less disastrous—but in matters relating to Essential Perfection.

The type of the free workman is the artist, and the artist is, by definition, one who is concerned with the Absolute Beauty. The Absolute Beauty is God. The artist is concerned with God. As the priest brings God to the marriage, the artist brings God to the work. All free workmen are artists. All workmen who are not artists are slaves.

GOD IS LOVE.

THE LOVE OF GOD IS SENSIBLE IN BEAUTY.

THE LOVE OF GOD IS MAN'S ESSENTIAL PERFECTION.

BEAUTY IS AN ESSENTIAL PERFECTION OF MAN'S WORK.

A GRAMMAR OF INDUSTRY

ANY statement as to the relations of men to one another or of men to their work must be based upon a clear understanding as to the nature of man. Agreement as to the nature of man is the first necessity—what sort of a thing is man? Without this agreement, expressed or implied, a statement of relationships is futile, and action, whether personal or political, undertaken without this proper basis in religion (for religion is precisely an answer to questions of ‘what’ and ‘why’) only results in confusion—confusion leading inevitably to dissipation and disintegration.

Now as Catholics we are agreed as to the nature of man—even though we do not always base our propositions upon that fact—but non-Catholics, even when they recognize the necessity of such an agreement, are under the painful necessity of beginning at the beginning, each for himself, and of building up piece by piece a philosophical system which shall form a foundation upon which to place their political structure.

It is necessary to agree as to the nature of man for obvious reasons. It is not possible, for any length of time, to keep canaries in hen-coops or lions in monkey-houses. Unless man’s affairs are organized upon lines suitable to his nature he must sooner or later react against the false system.

But, outside the Church, those who have not achieved any agreement among themselves as to the nature of man

are fond of supposing, and proclaiming, that such agreement is impossible. They assume that man's nature is constantly changing and that therefore a system suitable in one age is unsuitable in another, that the changes in forms of government and in conditions of work and employment are as much measures of the changes in man's nature (the thing they call 'progress') as they are indications of his unrest and dissatisfaction under unsuitable conditions. In answering such persons, we have not only got to satisfy them as to the truth of our fundamental doctrine that man's nature is now what it always has been—that man is man and not brute, nor ever was—we have also got to answer the question: why is it that, if man's nature is permanent and definable, he does not appear ever to have achieved a society as permanent as his nature? Why did not men, in the beginning, agree to live according to their nature and refuse to allow any change in their conditions?

The Catholic answers to the questions: what and why is man? imply the answers to the questions: why do forms of government and conditions of work change? The whole Catholic position is summed up in the first two questions and answers in the English 'Penny Catechism':

Q. Who made you?

A. God made me.

Q. Why did God make you?

A. God made me to know him, to love him and to serve him in this world and to be happy with him for ever in the next.

The answer to the question "What is man" may then be given thus: Man is a reasonable creature capable of knowing, loving and serving God. And there are several implications in this: that man is a reasonable creature capable of ignorance, hatred and rebellion—that man need not serve God if he does not choose to do so—that man has free will.

Suppose you make a thing for a particular purpose. That purpose is therefore the very nature of that thing viewed in relation to its activity. Suppose I make a knife for cutting bread. So far as its activity is concerned, cutting bread is the very nature of that knife. Suppose, though, that the knife, knowing its purpose and knowing of no other, refuses, for personal reasons, to cut bread, we should call that rebellion sin and the knife a sinner. Suppose, then, that the knife, for personal reasons as I say, took it into its head that it would cut stone instead of bread as being a more congenial task. Stone cutting not being an occupation for which it was really fitted would soon turn out to be an uncongenial occupation. The knife would then perhaps look round for bread—unless, of course, it were too proud to go back so quickly. "Now," the bread-owner might say, "look here, you're no good for the bread-board any longer. You've got blunt, and if you don't find some way of getting sharp again before your handle comes off your blade, I'll throw you into the dustbin for good and all—so there!" If I had a knife I had made which, out of pig-headedness, behaved like that, I should expect it to see at least the justice if not the mercy of the threat. So, as Mother Julian of Norwich

said, "sin is cause of all this pain." The nature of man is permanent, but human society has not remained stable because man has sinned—for that reason and for no other.

The whole business, then, is to discover what, in the welter of modern corruption and disorganization, is to be done. And, it must be repeated, nothing can be of any good that is not in accord with the nature of man.

Now we who are Catholics are agreed as to the nature of man. We are agreed that his very nature is his capacity for knowing, loving and serving God and, with Mother Julian, that sin is the cause of "all this pain." But we are very far from being agreed as to the application of christian doctrine to modern problems and conditions. I have heard it said that economics is no business of the theologian. I heard a priest say, in fact he said it to me, that modern conditions might be as evil as I said they were, but he didn't see how we could get on without those sanitary appliances and systems which are the product of the modern industrial system and would not exist without it. He said "a man can be a very good Catholic in a factory." Did I deny it? Of course not. But it does not follow, in fact is the reverse of the truth to say, that the factory system is a Catholic system or that factories are good places for promoting Catholicism.

It is not my intention to give my personal opinions, as a kind of artist, as to what kind of industrial system should be built upon Catholic dogma. My intention is simply to suggest what I believe to be principles logically deducible from Catholic teaching, principles which concern us, not

specially as artists, but as Catholics confronting the modern world.

The first thing I want to say, and it cuts at the root of all our present industrialism . . . why should I be concerned, by the way, to cut at the roots of our present industrialism? "Here," it will be said, "is one of these artist people with a 'down' on all things new and progressive and civilized. We thought as much. We knew he would not give us an unbiassed view—one which we could trust as being a calm, collected statement of principles. Here he goes at once, taking it for granted that everything is all wrong, that factories are the devil, that all modern progress is wicked, that only hand-made goods are Christian." . . . The first thing, and it cuts at the root, is this: "Dilige Deum et fac quod vis"¹—"Love God and do what you will." Loving God leads inevitably, as may be demonstrated, to the Church and thence to Heaven. Doing what you will leads . . . not to Glasgow—as a place of residence.

Many people are afraid of the words "do what you will." They think they sound like licence. But in fact they are thoroughly well safeguarded by the other two: "Love God." The loving of God cannot be done by those who refuse to recognize the voice of conscience. The voice of conscience must be silenced by those who use tyranny and injustice. Modern conditions of employment prevent men, even those who love God, from doing what they will. This is tyranny. It is a crime of injustice. Modern conditions are unjust.

¹ St Augustine

It is said that the essential perfection of a watch is that it keeps time. That is true of watches made in factories¹, for watches made in factories are, in effect, not made by men at all, inasmuch as no man can be held responsible for making them. Man is made by God and lives in that relationship. Things made by man must necessarily have that relationship also. Man is responsible to God for what he makes, and the essential perfection of a man-made watch is the love of God to which it bears witness. No man can be held responsible to God for a factory watch because no man can be held responsible for making it!

Factory conditions have no relationship to God. They exist to serve man. They do not exist to serve God.

The first principle, then, in a Catholic Grammar of Industry is that of Justice. "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his justice." It is unjust to employ a man upon terms which preclude the free play of his conscience both as a man and as a workman.

"Love God and do what you will"—I would be prepared to leave the matter there and let it work itself out, but there are some deductions which may profitably be made at once.

I will leave the deductions to be made from the words

¹ Factory: a place, where things are made, in which the individual workman is not responsible for the design or workmanship of the thing made, being only responsible for doing what he is told. Modern industrialism is built up on the twin forces of greed and need. Greed supplies the motive power for the masters, need keeps the men tame under servile conditions.

“Love God.” I have said that the Church is the deduction from that, and the demonstration of this statement is not particularly my business. What are the deductions to be made from the words “do what you will”?

Bearing in mind always Catholic teaching as to the nature of man—teaching, by the way, not only true but palpably true—the first deduction to be made is that man should have responsibility. Just as we hold a man responsible for his sins, so we should hold him responsible for his work. It does not matter whether the work be making things or doing things, in one way or another work must be organized so that the maker or doer is responsible. Work not so organized is organized upon an unchristian principle. We are out to serve God. The service of God is perfect freedom. Freedom is not incompatible with discipline; it is only incompatible with irresponsibility.

The second deduction is that, for a man to be responsible for doing what he will, he must be an owner. He must own his own tools and his own workshop. He must own his own home and his own homestead. He must own his work when done to sell or keep as he chooses. Finally, he must own the trade and be independent, at least potentially, of the middle-man.

It is not necessary that every single man in a community should be his own master. Not every man has the will or the capacity for minding his own business. There will always be masters and servants, as there will always be rich and poor. Nevertheless it is necessary that ownership should preponderate in the community not merely for the material

good of the community—that is comparatively unimportant—but for the safety of men's souls. The present state in which there are few owners and many slaves is founded on injustice, and therefore not only corrupt but corrupting.

The third deduction springs from the second. It is this: That if men are to control a trade and be independent of middle-men, they must be banded together in unions or guilds. The union is a corporate society. As the State exists for the individual and not the individual for the State (this in spite of the Prussia of yesterday and the Italy of today and all their imitators), so the union exists for the individual members and not they for it. Nevertheless the union or guild has this resemblance to the individual christian person: it must, like him, be founded upon the principle "Love God and do what you will." The collective will must, like the individual will, be directed first to the love of God and his justice, and, as in the case of the individual, this must be followed by responsibility, ownership and the power to unite with other corporate societies in the still larger union called the State.

And as the individual workman demands and needs responsibility and ownership and the right of union with his fellows for the protection and development of his trade or his activity or profession, and as the union demands and needs responsibility and ownership and the right of union with other guilds and societies in the State, so the State itself demands and needs responsibility, ownership, and the right of union with other states to form a league or confederation for its protection and development.

We have, then, the primary dogma that man exists to know, love and serve God. It is clear, therefore, that the achievement of material prosperity is not the primary object of christian politics. The establishment of the Kingdom of God on earth is not the end for which God gave his life. The primary object of christian politics is justice. The primary object of the Christian Church is the salvation of souls.

“Love God and do what you will.” Irresponsibility is inconsistent with the love of God. A man cannot do what he will unless he is responsible for what he does. Responsibility cannot be maintained without ownership, and ownership cannot be maintained without union.

These principles are Catholic principles justly deducible from Catholic teaching, and, as such, must form the basis of the revolution which the Catholic Church is, for the salvation of souls, bound to support and encourage.

We Catholics have got to agree first among ourselves; until that is achieved we have not to bother about agreement with anyone else.

It must be made clear to every Catholic man and woman that the Church is the poor man's friend—that she stands for Freedom, Responsibility, Ownership and Union, that she is the enemy of Servility and the opponent of those whose riches depend upon the degradation of men to the level of Slaves.

These facts have got to be made as notorious as they have been in the past. They have got to become as well known as her notorious views on marriage and education and as uncomfortable and discomfiting for her enemies.

WESTMINSTER CATHEDRAL

WHAT is to be said of Westminster Cathedral? Is it a great building? Is it more than a big building? The almost universal verdict is in the affirmative. It is not petty. It is a work of genius.

Now, genius has been defined as the will and ability "to put the first thing first," and certainly Bentley did so at Westminster. Whatever others may have said, Bentley did not say: "The first thing is to make a big byzantine church". The first thing he did was to envisage a great building suitable for christian worship, and, again putting the first thing first, he did not say: "It shall rival Beauvais in height or Rheims in sculpture"; he said: "This great christian church shall be built of massive piers of brick spanned by vaults of concrete—these are the available materials and I am not crying for the moon of mediaeval delight." He did not use such words, nor could he have used them. He was an old-fashioned English architect and was not aware of the social problem. He even dreamed of a building covered with a veneer of marble and mosaic! But though that was his dream, and even partly his achievement, he saw his church as a great building first and only second as a much adorned one.

This is obvious from the accomplished thing and is admitted even by those people who still, in this pagan age, hanker after pointed arches and pinnacles. Gothic! It is not a matter of points or cusps—it is a matter of adventure

undertaken in the spirit of a crusade—an adventure with bricks and stones. And in this spirit Bentley undertook the job at Westminster. As far as he was concerned, the job was as gothic as any christian job will always be, but with Bentley the adventure began and ended, for in spite of all the enthusiasm of his assistants and admirers, in spite of his daughter's eulogy, Westminster Cathedral is, architecturally, nothing but the memorial of its designer's sense of greatness in mass and proportion and of the servility of the modern workman.

For Bentley was an old-fashioned architect—a designer—a builder only by proxy—a director of other men's work. And those other men—those hundreds of bricklayers and concrete mixers, those 'architectural carvers' and marble workers—what were they? A set of tools, bought and sold, paid by the hour or week at a rate such as justice demanded, or their trade unions could enforce—men degraded by a century of commercialism and four centuries of heresy and schism. They did the work, but not their work, nor even work for any church of theirs; and the result is what anyone should expect—a fine plan, noble proportions, accurate brickwork, scientifically mixed concrete and a whole conglomeration of elegant and scholarly but utterly dead carvings, capitals, mouldings, domes and finials in a more or less imitation byzantine style. The outside of the building is almost entirely ruined by this absurd pandering to the appetite for ornamentation. The inside is only saved because it has been left unfinished and because the

mists of London hide the mechanical quality of the workmanship.

Tons of concrete, millions of bricks, and an army of paid slaves led by a man of genius! If only Bentley had not been an old-fashioned architect and had realized that you cannot gather figs of thistles or expect to get works of art by making careful designs for mere tradesmen to execute—but then he would not have got the job; so we must be thankful for the great good of a noble plan and forget the evil of its dead stylistic ornamentation, however annoying we may find it.

Nevertheless, it is worth considering; it is a vital matter this question of the architect and the builder, of the designer and the craftsman, and it is time we Catholics realized that the divine thing called beauty is not to be bought or supplied by contract. It is time we realized that we are living in a pagan age and in a servile state. The modern workman is not an artist. He is a tool. Let us act on this fact and confine ourselves to plain building—well planned, well proportioned but plain—unadorned and undecorated. We cannot buy or measure worship; let us confine ourselves to things that can be measured and paid for. A work of art is an act of worship—an act in which both maker and beholder take part as do priest and congregation at Mass (hence the liturgical and hieratic character of all the great religious arts—except in modern times—but then, modern art, except that of some of the so-called post-impressionists, is not religious at all—it is merely anecdotal). The great interior

of Westminster Cathedral is Bentley's act of worship. We can worship with him.

We Catholics are amazingly ignorant of the artistic degradation caused by modern social conditions. We have got so accustomed to the entirely irreligious notion that labour has no responsibilities beyond being good and quiet and doing what it is told that it never occurs to us to expect a workman to have a sense of beauty or any right to use it. We do not see that the modern method of building with an architect and contractor is essentially evil. Yet it is exactly as if an artist should decide the type of child required and the upbringing of children be made a commercial enterprise. A work of art is the product of love. How then can it be done to order and to a scale drawing?

It is true that Bentley is said to have desired that the work of decorating the cathedral should be given to artists and not to 'a firm,' and it is true that this desire has, to some extent, been acted upon (I do not refer to the stations of the cross—they are furniture, not decorations), but there is no record whatever that Bentley made any objection to the employment of a firm for any work of construction. There is no evidence that he thought bricklaying was or might be an art or the bricklayer an artist. Indeed, why should he? Bricklayers are not artists, nowadays, and through the whole of the cathedral you may look in vain for even the smallest indication that so many as one among its thousand builders had the smallest conception of any value beyond that of his week's pay.

We are not blaming Bentley for this state of affairs, nor do we blame the builders. We are simply deploring his inability to see the evil and their willingness to acquiesce in modern servile conditions of work. People talk of the beauty and variety of the capitals and carved mouldings (even of those ridiculous ribands which vainly appear to hang up the portrait medallions at the west door) as though twentieth-century stone carvers could make things of beauty by copying an architect's designs! No doubt Bentley was a great scholar and a man of great refinement, but the architectural adornment of Westminster Cathedral is dead. "The great things are the masterly structure . . . taste and learning are the least parts of Bentley's work. He had to supply them to justify himself to his employers and his epoch, but the merit of the cathedral goes altogether beyond stylism." So wrote Professor Lethaby, and we are thankful that at least one piece of true criticism should have appeared and from so authoritative a source.

Westminster Cathedral is a great building. But it is great in spite of its designer's weakness as an architectural practitioner and in spite of the servile conditions of his employees. As a piece of brick and concrete work it is magnificent. In any other view it is scarcely less ridiculous than the Albert Memorial or the Pavilion at Brighton. The unadorned interior of Westminster, the Forth Bridge, the Nile Dam at Assouan—these are great and beautiful works. If we want more than these, if we want buildings of which every stone shall be evidence of the love of God, then we

must regain our birthright and make England again a christian and a Catholic country.

I have said nothing of Bentley's other works—his few churches, his countless furnitures and fittings. But these do not count. In them he was an old-fashioned architect—an architect of superior knowledge and attainments, it is true—a man of resource and energy, but such works are unimportant. It is by his cathedral that he will be remembered, and for its bricks and concrete that he will be revered.

DRESS

BY the design of divine Providence vanity has been from the beginning the virtue of male creatures. That he should take a pride in his physical condition and appearance is a necessity of the male, and vanity is designed for his advancement. This fact is sufficiently obvious throughout the whole of the animal creation, and the peacock, though a flagrant exemplar of the principle, is by no means an exceptionally fine bird. On the other hand, we are not aware of the existence of any female creature which so much as vies with her male, and certainly of none that rivals him. And this fact is as remarkable as it is obvious. There is more in it than meets the eye. Surely it is of divine origin, and surely a female peacock would be a monstrosity.

But however it may be among the animals, among human beings the case is to-day reversed. Drab clothing is so generally the apparel of the male that the vision of the peacock in his finery suggests to us a female thing and, were it not for his name, we should actually suppose him to be a she.

This is a remarkable state of affairs and it has even been stated as a law: "Finery is for the male in all creatures except the human." It is suggested that this vanity of the human female is but another proof of the difference and superiority of humanity as compared with animals.

I believe the time has come to make a stand against this inversion of the natural order. I believe that vanity

and personal conceit are as much the right and proper accompaniment of the male among human beings as among animals. Among women, I maintain, vanity is ipso facto vicious—a sign of degradation, a proof of departure from the divine plan, the fruit of irreligion and sexual abnormality and abandon.

And by vanity I do not mean merely an excess of regard for personal appearance or physical condition. I am not thinking only of those who use powder and paint upon their persons or of those who wear high heels or tight corsets. I am thinking of all those who take the least pride in their looks, all those who give so much as half a thought to the question of what other people will think about them. Excessive vanity is not the only kind of vanity—and, for the matter of that, what is excessive? It is a purely relative term, and without principles to guide us we shall be quite unable to judge the particular degree of tightness in a corset or highness in a heel which constitutes excess.

Now the guiding principle is the one with which I head this scripture. Vanity is virtue in the male and, per contra, vice in the female. Such is the will of God. Any practice or custom which is based upon an inversion of this principle is impious. And, from this point of view, both men and women are in these times at fault. If woman is to blame for getting herself up like a strumpet, man also is to blame for neglecting and eschewing his birthright and he is equally wrong to encourage her and to make money out of her depravity. The newspapers and periodicals of to-day are

filled from end to end with the most barefaced flatteries of woman's perverted taste. Modesty and self-effacement, which are the proper virtues of the female, have, in the course of the last four hundred years, become the attributes of the male. Man is to-day the modest sex—woman the immodest.

It is the fashion for men to wear coats and trousers so that when you see such garments you may generally suppose their wearer to be a male. But it is not the fashion of her clothes by which you know a woman. Fashions change too rapidly to have any such useful quality. No, in the case of women you know them by the sexual attributes which many are at such pains to display. So that vanity, which leads to no harmful but only beneficent results in man, leads in woman to every depravity, of which mere exhibitionism is the least. Vanity in men does not lead to sexual exhibitions, because women are not inflammable in that way and are more frightened than pleased by it. Vanity in women, on the other hand, leads directly to physical display, because man is the most inflammable creature on earth and has no physical fear of contact with woman.

That woman should be the immodest sex is in fact the most astonishing anomaly. Such a state of affairs is always the accompaniment of decadence and that thing of which decadence is the result—irreligion. It cannot be too plainly stated. The dress of contemporary women is the dress of the prostitute. The fashions of Park Lane and South Kensington and Upper or even Lower Tooting are based upon the

fashions of Piccadilly. Do the women know it? No, even nuns do not, and they are shocked at the mention of such a thing. For woman still retains a certain innocence and all her ancient irrationality. Should a boy wear coloured socks they call him effeminate, whereas he is simply boyish. Does he do so that women may admire his ankles? Such an idea does not occur to him, and naturally it does not because, though girls are quite capable of admiration of a boy's limbs, their admiration is normally quite dispassionate. This is obvious when you consider how nearly naked men can be in games or races without any serious notice being taken by women, whereas it is impossible to imagine a boxing match between two women, naked but for short drawers, without disorderly results.

But consider the case of the girl with short skirts and "nude" stockings. If she denies that she wears such things to attract men, she is either a liar or an idiot. In this matter girls are brought up to be idiots nowadays. Their grandmothers wore paddings round their hips to make themselves look bulgily attractive. The modern girl plays another game and wears as little as possible—in all innocence very often. But it is time the thing were unmasked. It is no use saying things have gone too far, women should be more careful, girls should be more modest, and so on. That is not the line to take in this business. The truth of the matter is that vanity in dress is not a female concern. Nuns, nurses, and servant-maids are the only decently dressed women. Women should dress in uniforms and be thoroughly covered up. All mirrors

should be taken away from them, and they should learn to wear their hats upon their heads instead of upon their faces. It is quite easily done, with a little practice. And above all, the world should be spared the horrid sight of elderly women, parsons' wives, and the wives of cabinet ministers, dressed to look attractive. Being good is more important than fashionable appearance, and no one will be able to stop them from learning the Penny Catechism and the rules of modesty.

Man is, on the whole, a more reasonable creature than woman, and vanity, his proper accomplishment, may safely be left in his care without fear of its running away with him. He has not time for unprofitable strutting in the streets or gaping in shop windows. Certainly the display in shops of feminine garments, whether of hats or frocks or underclothes, should be punishable at law as an unwarrantable indecency and an insult to common sense.

Vanity in women is mere personal display, and women should not display their persons. Vanity in men is simply 'good form,' so that a man looking into a mirror does not see himself but the world. In a woman, clothes are a means to the enhancement of her own beauty—in a man they are an enhancement of the beauty of things in general. So it is that when, as too frequently happens, a woman plays the piano she is only interested in her own performance, whereas a man goes even so far as to take a passing interest in the music. Everything is for women a means of personal display; for man everything is a means to recreation.

But let it not be supposed that men and women, pure and simple, are anywhere to be found. We are all mixtures of one another, in our minds as in our bodies, and every male is more or less female, every female more or less male. In most persons, however, the male or the female is predominant, and the vast majority of men are only slightly female and of women only slightly male. It is therefore possible to distinguish between the sexes and to say what properly belongs to each. Fundamentally, it is child-bearing that makes the difference. A woman knows her own child, but it is a wise man that knows his own father, and the great act of life is for woman a personal achievement, while for man it is a mystery.

Women are by the grace of God our mothers. They have everything to gain and nothing to lose by modesty. By display and vanity they have gained nothing and have come near to losing man's respect. Vanity in man is respectable for it does neither him nor woman any harm, and, being naturally more recreative and artistic than woman, he makes it the means of beauty instead of mere loveliness. The loveliness of women does not need the enhancement of frippery, and the problem of the million 'odd women' can be better dealt with than by making prostitutes of them all.

SONGS WITHOUT CLOTHES

THE Song of Solomon is one of the canonical books declared by Holy Church to be an inspired writing. It is a poem of which atheists can see the beauty, even when they cannot see the meaning—of which moralists can see the meaning, even when they cannot see the beauty.

But the Song of Solomon is a love song, and one of a very outspoken kind, and in modern England such things are not considered polite. The Song of Songs, like the Angelic Salutation, would never, in its unbowdlerized state, be included in ecclesiastical literature were it the work of any modern poet, and if it were known to be the work of a wealthy and luxurious monarch it would scarcely be tolerated even in secular literature. Puritanism and vice make cowards of us.

“How can the Song of Solomon be called a religious poem?” the sceptic asks. “It is all about love-making, and the charms of woman.”

“*Duo ubera tua, sicut duo hinnuli caprae gemelli*” (iv, 5).

By what stretch of imagination, by what perversity of clerical apologetics, can such things be called religious? But, indeed, no imagination need be put upon the rack. The whole difficulty arises from our misunderstanding and consequent misuse of the words ‘religious’ and ‘secular.’ We suppose them to designate opposite, or at least discordant categories. We say a thing is religious when we consider it not merely good and pious, but in some way

ecclesiastical. We say a thing is secular when not being ecclesiastical we think it not religious. But the two words do not connote opposed or opposite categories, and as applied to works of art this modern use of them is disastrous. All art properly so called is religious, because all art properly so called is an affirmation of absolute values. If we allow the name art to anything irreligious (i.e. affirming relative values) then such art is not, therefore, secular, it is merely paltry¹. All things are ordained to ends. Some things are ordained to a final end—some merely to a half-way house which, though not an end in itself, is an end for some things. Those things we call religious which are ordained to God as their end. Those things we call secular which, though not irreligious, do not envisage God as their end immediately. Thus a church is called a religious building, and an inn we call secular. But an inn is not, therefore, irreligious. Those things are irreligious which are ordained to mammon as their end—that is, the devil and hell—they are neither secular or ecclesiastical, as such, but simply damned. The confusion arises either by our supposing the word religious to mean simply ecclesiastical, or by our confining its use to those things which are ordained immediately to God by definition. But all things may be, and properly should be, ordained to God in fact. Thus an inn, though not so defined, may be, in fact, a house of God, and, contrari-

¹ The technical distinction between religious and secular, as applied to different kinds of clerics, need not here concern us, though this use of the word is allied to the ordinary use.

wise, a church may be, and often is, no more than a monument to human pride and vainglory.

But everything is religious by which God is praised, and in this sense the Song of Solomon is a religious poem indeed. Not only is God praised in it, and by it, but his praises are sung in the strongest of all symbolic terms. The love of man and woman is made the symbol of God's love for man, and of Christ's love for the Church. The Church is the bride of Christ. But the love of man and woman is the symbol of God's love, not because man makes it such, but because God made it such. The Church is more truly and really the bride of Christ than any woman is the bride of a man, and all the words of love may be applied to the heavenly bridegroom, and with the greater force. The only question is: Did the writer of the Song of Songs intend a heavenly symbolism, or do we force his words to bear a meaning which, in fact, they do not warrant?

The Song of Solomon is a religious poem by interpretation, and by its intrinsic quality. We will discuss these aspects separately.

THE SONG OF SOLOMON IS A RELIGIOUS POEM BY INTERPRETATION

Just as a lamb is a religious emblem by interpretation, and a crucifix is a religious emblem by interpretation, so a love poem may be a religious poem by interpretation. A lamb is not by definition a religious emblem, nor is a crucifix. If we know them to be, in fact, so intended, then we may so interpret them, however naturalistic they may

appear, and, conversely, anything may be made a religious emblem, if we wish, whether its maker so intended it or not. To-day the most naturalistic farmyard lamb or dove is, if displayed on a church banner, taken without demur to have a religious significance, and we do not therefore infer that christians worship sheep or pigeons. The same object displayed upon a butcher's cart, or upon a coat-of-arms, would not be taken to have any religious significance. It appears, therefore, that the place of the symbol determines its significance. On a church banner a lamb is a religious emblem, on a cart it is not so regarded.

So the appearance of the Song of Songs in the middle of the Bible brands it as a religious poem. But it remains to be explained how it came about that such a poem ever got into the Bible, and how it came about that the Church placed a religious interpretation upon it.

In the Song of Solomon the love of man and woman is the symbol of the love of Christ and the Church. The poet cannot be accused, however, of the bestial naturalism of the modern purveyor of ecclesiastical symbols. To say "*venter eius eburneus, distinctus sapphiris*" (v, 14) is not photographic, though to say "*inter ubera mea commorabitur*" (i, 12) is not obscure. To say that the Song of Solomon is a naked poem is not, therefore, to say that it is naturalistic. It is heraldic rather than naturalistic, and, as in all good heraldry, there is no obscurity about its symbolism. The symbolism is not obtained by using words in any but their strictly natural senses, but by the intention of the poet.

Thus, if one should speak of "the strong arm of God" the words 'strong' and 'arm' are used in their strictly natural senses, but the intention is not to suggest that God has a muscularly well-developed upper limb, but that God has power to hit and to hold. To 'hit' and to 'hold'! There, again, is heraldry, and it is, in fact, impossible to speak of God otherwise than heraldically. The only difficulty is in the choice of symbols, and in this matter poets of all ages have chosen according to their genius and their sense of fitness. In a strongly religious age all good things will be recognized as being types of divine things. In an irreligious age, on the contrary, divine things will be made symbols of human things, and that humanity was created in the image of God will be forgotten, or remembered only as a jest.

One tragic effect of irreligion is that relative values alone are recognized. Honesty is only inculcated as being the best policy. Sexual morals are thought of as a matter of merely social convenience. Beauty is unknown, and art is nothing more than a means of adornment, of additional refinement, or of pleasure. In such an age even those who have religion look askance at anything not obviously utilitarian, and live in a state of perpetual fear lest their own comfort be disturbed. Any revolutionary movement brought about by the spiritual starvation of the age they condemn unheard, and they vie with their irreligious neighbours in the vehemence of their condemnations. The social and industrial conditions of the twentieth century are the direct result of irreligion; yet when the conscience of mankind revolts, the religious

people hold up hands of horror and quake for their investments—the religious people! even many who firmly and sincerely hold the Catholic faith.

The national and individual sense of beauty has been undermined and destroyed by an irreligious commercialism. Art has become merely a flattery of rich men. Portraiture of ourselves has replaced the making of images of the saints—a perfectly natural and inevitable result of the shifting of interest from divine to human things, and of a complete absorption in relative instead of absolute values; yet when a revolutionary movement breaks out, when young men refuse to worship Mammon, and to spend their time flattering rich customers, and devote themselves instead to a search for the Holy Grail (by whatever name they call it), to a discovery of absolute beauty, and make it a point of honour to adore God, and to serve only him—then the religious ones shriek with horror, and, throwing every religious conception to the winds, form themselves into a solid mass in support of the worshippers of Mammon, the purveyors of lovable sweetmeats, the dexterous and sentimental landscape photographers, the white marble nymph manufacturers.

Married love in a pagan age has become a discredited fable. Virginity and chastity are regarded as superstitions. Legitimacy and freedom from disease are the only recognized marks of virtue. Marriage is no longer a sacrament, but simply a contract made and unmade at law—law which is more and more openly disowning its allegiance to the christian principles which were formerly its support and

foundation. The intercourse of the sexes is thought to be a pleasant but essentially despicable contrivance for reproduction, enjoyed in secret, but of which any mention or representation is called disgusting. And the religious, though their faith forbids them, share the common degradation, so that any poet or artist who dares to see in human love a type of divine love, and yet refrains from dressing his view of the matter in the faded garment of modern ecclesiastical stained-glass is at once pounced upon as an erotomaniac, a danger to society, an immoral person, as though the Song of Songs were upon the Index and should be forbidden reading in seminaries and suburbs.

Ah! they will say, but your modern poets are not Solomons . . . and their poems have not the exquisite beauty of the incomparable Song of Songs. Perhaps this is true, but the judgement can only be given upon the evidence, and as for evidence where is there in the Song of Solomon one single word by which you may judge it to be intended as a vision of divine love? The evidence is not verbal. It is traditional and intuitive. Tradition has ascribed that intention to the poem, and intuition confirms the ascription. The beauty of the poem is such that it can have no lesser significance. History is witness to the fact that only with such intentions do poets achieve so high a perfection. No man could praise his lover's body with such complete assurance, such appalling certitude, unless his lover were God himself. And this is true of all works of art which, going beyond flattery and self-satisfaction, become acts of worship. This it is that

makes the thing called art a thing of importance—it is an expression of man's vision of the fact that all good is a type of God—an application to all things of the prayer that temporal gifts may become eternal remedies¹.

We may suppose that the human race has never been more vicious than it is to-day in industrialized Europe and America, yet erotic literature and art have never been more severely repressed. Police court reports of human frailty are, of course, the staple reading of enormous numbers, and among the more cultured a certain sentimental nudity is popular, but the literature of love, in which mere nakedness is transcended by vision of the permanent value of things good in themselves, this is neither appreciated nor allowed, and that the thoughts, words and deeds of human lovers can be seen as types of the love of God and its most potent symbols is completely forgotten or disbelieved. The Song of Solomon, taken from its place in the middle of the christian sacred book would, in this pagan age, be thought to have none but a natural significance, and if that is so in the case of a well-known and ancient poem we are even more blind to any supernatural significance in the writings of modern poets.

“Beloved undrest,
What perfect rest
On thy woman's breast.
Adrift on such sea
I am evermore free—
Dear Branch of God's Tree!”

¹ Prayer at Mass: “Quod ore sumpsimus . . .”

But, it may be asked, what is there to show that the modern poet of this modern song¹ intends more than a praise of natural love? What, we reply by asking, is there to show that Solomon, in the Song of Songs, intended more than a praise of natural love? There are two ways of discussing the answers to these questions. One is the way of charity, the other the way of intelligence. The way of charity prompts us to ascribe good rather than evil motives to others, high rather than low and, further, to see good rather than evil in their works. First, you passively ascribe it; then you actively discover it. This state of charity is necessary to anyone who would be a critic, for you cannot certainly see evil where you are unwilling to see good. "Unless the Lord build the city they labour in vain that build it" is a statement that applies to the work of criticism as much as to the work of building. God is to be the architect of our souls as well as of other people's, and without charity divine architecture is impossible, for charity is the cement of such building.

The Song of Solomon is a religious poem by interpretation, and to this work of interpretation charity has been brought for centuries, so that a religious interpretation is the traditional interpretation. The Song of Solomon is, however, the only really well-known love poem that enjoys, at the present time, this advantage. Many other ancient poems are, in fact, so regarded, and the writings of christian mystics, full as they are of the same imagery, are not eccle-

¹ I quote only a portion of the poem.

siastically condemned; but, towards modern works, so degraded are we by an almost universal utilitarianism and materialism, we instantly take up a hostile and uncharitable position, and assume as a matter of course that the poet is a lewd fellow. The same thing may be said of painting and sculpture, and, even, indeed, the decorative arts. Anything at all clear and definite in imagery is at once put down as an incitement to sin or a thrusting of an occasion of sin before the innocent and unwary, whereas it is very well known that it is not nakedness that is an occasion of sin, but the half-shown and half-hidden. In fact, when a man says: "I love the roundness of thighs" he may generally be understood to mean that he loves God, but when he says he adores "the hidden mystery in his mistress's eyes—the gentleness of her gracious touch" he may generally be understood to mean that he loves lechery. Irreligion generally wears the dress of politeness; those who love truth seldom love compromise. In religious times and places things are very different. In such times it is taken for granted that the human is a type of the divine; and the heavenly significance of any poem or painting is at once sought and found.

But the centre of gravity shifted in the sixteenth century from Heaven to earth, and men ceased to walk with God, and began walking in their own company. And they ceased to build churches, and began building country mansions. They ceased to make images of God and the saints, and began developing the art of portraiture. They forgot our Blessed Lady and remembered their mistresses. And it was

more than forgetfulness; it was denial. It was more than inaction; it was iconoclasm.

Yet, in spite of the general ruin, religion has been preserved, and, in spite of the general degradation, there have always been individual artists who, though their customers and often themselves did not know it, were really seeing the universal in the particular, the Creator in the creature. Dante, for all the ridiculous romance that has been woven about him, saw in Beatrice and made of her a symbol of divine knowledge. Rembrandt, for all his interest in the anecdote, is really only concerned with the absolute Beauty. Cézanne, for all his interest in Nature, is really absorbed in God. Their customers cannot see it, and neither, very often, do ecclesiastics, for many see nothing in art but a sauce for sermons, and are utterly unable to see that a work of art may have, like Nature, an intrinsic Beauty and a supernatural value quite apart from any representative or useful or lovable quality.

It is clear, then, that if we interpret the Song of Solomon as a religious poem we do so because we choose to do so, and not because it is so labelled by its author. We choose to do so—first, because such is the interpretation given by the Church; second, because, in spite of the customs of this ridiculous age with its combined priggishness and vice, a religious interpretation is the only one that will stand the test of time. A naturalistic interpretation is found on trial to be impossible. The mind revolts against so elaborate a flattery of merely human charms. It is absurd. As a praise

of divine love it is, indeed, inadequate, but as a praise of human love it is fulsome¹. How much better it would be if we were to apply the same remedy to all art, and seek in it divine rather than human praise. The sonnets of Shakespeare, for example, immediately become intelligible, and his dark lady at once knowable. The primitive sculptures and paintings of India, China and Greece, and the folk songs of all the world immediately take their proper place in the human chorus of praise and blessing. And last, and for us most important, the efforts of our own contemporaries become reasonable—the works of those who, called “Post-Impressionists,” coming after that last dying flare of the idolaters, Impressionism, refusing to continue man’s song of praise of himself, now dare again to utter absolute statements, and, however waywardly, and with whatever youthful flouting of your materialist and hedonist prejudices, again say in paint and stone: “Blessed be God; blessed be his holy Name.”

I ask you to assume this in the name of charity, and following the example of Holy Church in the matter of the Song of Songs. But it is not necessarily an utterly gratuitous assumption, for a work of art is properly a work of religious significance by its intrinsic quality as well as by interpretation. Let me then proceed to this second division of my thesis.

¹ Compare our Lord’s words to St Peter: “Tu es Petrus et super hanc petram . . .” Such talk is but flattery and jesting if it mean a merely human prerogative and an endurance no greater than the span of one man’s lifetime.

THE SONG OF SOLOMON IS A RELIGIOUS POEM
BY ITS INTRINSIC QUALITY

Intrinsic quality is that quality in a thing by which it is what it is. What a thing means is one thing; what it is is another. The two may be inseparable in the thing, but they are separable in thought, and in the present confusion categorical distinction is imperative.

Philosophically the necessary basis of all religion is the affirmation of absolute values. That such and such is good because it is good, and for no other reason; that such and such is true because it is true, and that such and such is beautiful because it is beautiful, and for no other reasons—these are affirmations of absolute value.

A person making such affirmations has, in however limited a form, religion¹. Many persons deny that any such statements are possible. They say that nothing has more than relative value; that we have no right to say of anything that it is good, except as relative to our needs, and they would

¹ It should be understood that, strictly speaking, there can be but one absolute, viz.: God. But, in the paucity of language, we say, elliptically, that those things have absolute value of which the value-standard is God alone. God is its relation, not man's need or convenience. One thing is good because man loves it—another because God loves it. Both have, therefore, relative value. The former has value relative to man's love of it; the latter relative to God's love of it. We call the former relative value, the latter absolute value, because man loves the relatively good, but God can only love the absolutely good.

build a philosophy upon a basis of relativity. But I am not proposing to argue this matter here. I am not concerned to prove the truth or untruth of religion. It suffices for my purpose that, rightly or wrongly, the thing religion exists. People have got it; they get it, keep it, or lose it; and those that have it are different from those that have it not. They do different things for they love different things. The possession of it is visible in their works, and is, in fact, the only thing that gives their work any permanent value.

They do good because they love God. "What," asked Socrates in the 'Euthyphron,' "is Holiness?" "That which the gods love," replied the pious young man about to arraign his father. "But is it holy because they love it? or do they love it because it is holy?" That was the Socratic rejoinder, and then Euthyphron suddenly discovered that he had no time for arguing. But, indeed, the answer is not as difficult as Euthyphron found it. That which is holy because they love it, is holy relatively to their love of it. That which they love because it is holy is holy absolutely, and is God himself. God loves himself and himself only. God loves the world because he loves that in it which corresponds with himself. Man, therefore, in loving good absolutely, loves God. But, if God is absolutely good, he is also absolutely true and beautiful, and man, in loving goodness, truth and beauty, loves God. Now, religion is properly a life and not a theory. It is, therefore, impossible to make a complete statement of it in words. The infinite is a person and not an hypothesis. Truth is a who and not a what. Jesus said: "I am the Way,

the Life, the Truth," and Pilate had been answered before he asked his question. But if a complete statement is impossible, a partial statement of the nature and obligations of truth and goodness can be made, and to this end many creeds have been formulated, adumbrating and leading up to the complete statement, which is Christ. In the matter of beauty, however, even a partial statement is impossible in words, and we can only fall back on the knowledge that God is beauty as he is love and that Nature is a partial revelation of him. Even Nature is only a partial revelation, because no individual thing in nature is a perfect manifestation of its prototype in the mind of God. Nevertheless, by an intuitive process man is capable of constructing an idea of beauty nearer to God's mind than is any natural object, and in the activity called art he is both contemplative and apostolic.

The utility of good conduct is so obvious that even in an irreligious age strenuous efforts are made for the inculcation of morals, and those who are quite insensible to beauty, or even to truth, both of which have less obviously utilitarian value, are ready enough to support the churches, whether Christian or otherwise, in their attempts to foster at least a minimum of neighbourly good manners. Yet it is really a pitiful sight to see the fear of the moralist when confronted with the moral decrepitude of an industrialized country, for the same man, though the enormity is as great or greater, will cheerfully condone sins against the Holy Ghost when expressed in philosophic or aesthetic terms.

To do what we love doing because we love doing it, and

not because it is good, leads to not doing what is good because we do not love doing it—this is wickedness. To think what we like to think because we like thinking it and not because it is true, leads to not thinking what is true because we do not like thinking it—this is wickedness. To see what we like seeing, not because it is beautiful, but because we like seeing it, or to hear what we like hearing because we like hearing it, and not because it is beautiful, leads to the rejection of what is beautiful because we do not like seeing or hearing it—this is wickedness. The will is involved in all these sins, but because the inconvenience attending breaches of codes of action are more obvious and more immediately destructive of our economic security we are much more ready to be down on such sins than upon those which do not so immediately and apparently affect our pockets and our persons, or the persons of those we love. Yet the sins of the flesh are no more wicked, and involve less deliberate hatred of God, than sins of the mind. The fleshly appetites are imperious and urgent, and the sinner has often much temptation. But for self-indulgence in matters of the mind we can claim less excuse, and, though they may not be obvious, the results of mental depravity are at least equally disastrous, for blasphemy is a rot of the soul. We are ready enough to praise the ascetic who mortifies his body; we have little praise for him who mortifies his mind, who refuses to wallow in the sensual delights of the eye and ear, and in this respect pious people are not the least offenders. In nunneries and monasteries, where the utmost physical mortification is

practised, the utmost aesthetic and sentimental licence is allowed. The intellectual depravity exhibited in most modern churches is appalling, and the seeming complacency with which, in such places, they will tell you that they don't know anything about music, for example, but that they know what they like, is such as to make the disgust of clear-minded people easily understandable. God is good. How would the Catholic priest take it if someone said to him: "I don't know what is good, but I know what I like doing"? God is truth. How would he take it if one said: "I don't know what is true, but I know what I like thinking"? Supposing there were no infallible guides in the matter of goodness, beauty, and truth, it would still be reasonable to suppose that sensual wallowing in any form of mental and physical delight would not be the best road to that self-forgetfulness which is essential to the love of God. It has been said that there can be no true mysticism without asceticism, and it is true that the first stage in the soul's journey to God is renunciation. They make the glory of God's house their excuse. They deceive themselves for they make their own physical likes and dislikes the test of what is glorious. What is pretty, what is pleasing, what they can rest on as on a cushion, what reminds them of things and places they like—such is the stuff they presume to deck out the house of God withal, and all must be done according to some approved fashion, so that just as the suburban lady cannot imagine a house without a drawing-room, so modern people can hardly imagine a church that is not gothic or classic.

Gothic or classic make them feel those comfortable physical sensations which they take to be appropriate in a place of worship, and I suppose it would be impossible for them to believe that other people are as nauseated by their churches as they would themselves be in a night club. When confronted with these considerations they take refuge in a posture of innocence. They say: "We can't all be expert artists; don't despise the gifts of the poor." But they are not expected to be expert artists any more than we are expected to be expert theologians, and they are not the gifts of the poor. They are the commercial product of factories upon which the poor people's money has been expended, and they have thus expended it because it pleased them to do so. Who has not seen them in the ecclesiastical furnishers like women in a hat shop. They like the stuff, and the poor like it too, and are not encouraged to make any rebellion against the commercial and industrial conditions which foster the manufacture of such sentimental nastiness. Four centuries of heresy and schism have destroyed industrial freedom. The modern workman is a servile tool, and all sense of absolute value has been destroyed in him. The good is what will sell, the beautiful is what will sell, the true is what will sell. And what, in fact, will sell? Simply what pleases a people given over to mental luxury and sloth. The workman is to blame for being so supine a slave, but their teachers are also at fault, for their leniency to the merely rich, their acquiescence in the gradual building up of modern servile conditions of industry—the factory system—which has speed,

quantity and cheapness, and the increase of profits for its sole aims, and their blindness to the bearings of the faith upon matters of life and work. "A man can be a very good Catholic in a factory"; that is the utmost limit of the acumen of most Catholic moralists in this matter. St Agnes was a very good Catholic in a Roman brothel. But neither statement proves that such places are suitable for Catholics, or that servile labour or prostitution are christian activities.

"The law, therefore, should favour ownership, and its policy should be to induce as many as possible of the humbler classes to become owners." These are the words of Pope Leo XIII. How far have they been acted upon or even preached by Catholic leaders? Instead of this they have contented themselves with giving more or less genteel hints to masters and manufacturers to the effect that they should be more kind to their employees, and pay them more generously, and have kept all their anger for the unfortunate workman, whom they have never been slow to accuse of idleness and treachery. There are honourable exceptions. But here we have only to note the general truth that most Catholics do not make any firm and definite disavowal of the modern industrial system (they even batten upon it by investing funds in industrial undertakings) and that, as a consequence, the masses of the poor, whose condition, as Leo XIII said, "is little better than that of slavery itself", regard the Church as the supporter of money-makers and the opponent of freedom.

¹ The encyclical 'Rerum Novarum'

The Church is not the enemy of freedom. She is its only real support, and also she is the only opponent of the merely rich. But at the present time these facts are hidden from the majority of the people by reason of the inertia and ignorance of Catholic leaders both lay and cleric. And in nothing is this inertia and ignorance more evident than in the encouragement given to the irreligious and merely sensual and sentimental art of a commercial civilization.

The efforts of priests to inculcate morals are suspect. For they are taken to be made merely in support of an established society which the masses of the workers recognize as rotten. If men strike for higher wages—and £500 per annum is considered high wages—they are accused of envy, vice, disloyalty and greed. But if a master, by degrading labour—increasing the quantity and lowering the quality—is able to increase his income from £5000 to £10,000 per annum, he is considered a prince of the people, and, if he gives large subscriptions to churches or charities, his methods as a manufacturer are not even questioned—on the contrary, they are belauded. And all this is not because the leaders are really snobbish or corrupt, but simply because they have not had either the courage or the energy to apply the principles of the Faith to the life of the times. “They are without intellectual courage—in a word, they are more ready for martyrdom than the apostolate.” They have failed to see that you cannot preach the responsibility of men for their sins and not oppose to the utmost a civilization which denies to men responsibility for their work, and deprives them of

ownership of their homes and workshops. The cry for higher and higher wages and shorter hours and more amusements is the inarticulate demand of an enslaved and degraded proletariat—a proletariat so far degraded and enslaved that it has lost even the appetite for ownership and responsibility, and has forgotten that it ever had such things.

And if among the proletariat the efforts of the clergy to inculcate morals are suspect, and the people are unable to believe that such a thing as a divine law, a law of absolute value, exists—at the other pole of civilization, the Church is equally discredited, and people of ascetic mind are revolted at the sentimentality and sensuality of the paraphernalia of christian worship. We say we have the truth, and we deck it out in sham gothic trappings!

It is no use blaming the architects. Anyone with a little thought can see that there is no real necessity to employ an architect. He is a person whose whole *raison d'être* consists in his supposed ability to protect his customers from the rapacity of commercial builders, and to supply what a commercial builder naturally and properly lacks, namely:—a sense of beauty in design. The builder has become merely a man of business and his men mere tools. He is concerned primarily for profits, and they for wages. So we call in an architect to supply beauty! And as he cannot supply it he supplies us with 'gothic' or 'classic' or some other bygone style, fondly believing and persuading those responsible to believe (and apparently thoroughly succeeding) that style is beauty. Shall we achieve truth by writing in the style of

St Thomas Aquinas? No more shall we achieve beauty by building in the style of the middle ages or in any other style but that one which is the product of our own vision of God. Beauty is not a matter of style; it is a matter of the love of God. "The vision of it is the work of him who has the will to see." But though it cannot be demonstrated to the blind, the essence of it can be described, and at least a simple test may be given by which we may make a beginning of the examination of conscience.

If it can be said of a man that he did such and such a thing for the love of God, and not for the love of any worldly advantage to himself or others, we cannot say: Therefore his act is, in fact, good. But we can say that such a motive is a good motive, and that habitual action with such a motive would be presumptive evidence in favour of the goodness of his actions. The more strictly critical such a man were in his examination of conscience the greater would be the presumption in his favour. Suppose now that to the unaided conscience were added the infallible guide of the Holy Spirit speaking through the Church; then of actions undertaken with that guidance, and solely for the love of God, and not for any worldly advantage, we can say with certainty that they are good.

The application of these principles to works of art is not so difficult as is often supposed. Writing a book, painting a picture, feeding the hungry, are all acts involving the will, and demanding the correspondence of the will of man with the will of God for their perfecting. "This is the will of God—your sanctification." Sanctification—that is making

holy, and nothing can be made holy which is merely self-indulgence. In the matter of art it is self-indulgence that is the whole trouble. Artists and customers are both outrageously self-indulgent. The great majority of modern artists are not concerned with beauty at all, but simply with the representation of what pleases them sentimentally. This trade may be quite useful, and even, when morally conducted, quite harmless, but it is obviously of only relative and ephemeral value. The subject of a picture may be of absolute value, but the painting of it may be quite the opposite, and that is the thing which causes most of the confusion in modern minds, for it has come to be assumed that it is subject that gives a work of art its value, whereas, in fact, subject is no more important in a work of art than in any other act of love. The subject is simply the jumping-off ground, and a jumping-off ground, though generally and for most people necessary, is not a *sine qua non*. The sight of a beggar moves you to compassion, and you give him alms, but the important thing is not the beggar or the alms, but the compassion and the will to express it. Some people are compassionate without the assistance of beggars and without the possession of money! The beggar and his hunger are simply the spring-board for your act of charity. In the same way you see a spider and you are moved to—what? If you are a timid sort of person, and unused to spiders, you will shiver with a sort of horror. If you are not timid, and are interested in natural mechanisms, you will be moved to admiration at the perfection of the creature as an organized

contrivance for the performance of certain functions. If, however timid, you are one of God's little children, and are moved to love of him by the beauty of his creation, then to what deed will you be urged? Wonderful to relate, the answer given to-day most readily will be that you will get a piece of paper, and make a copy of the spider! What an anti-climax! You might as well suggest that the compassion to which you are moved at the sight of a beggar should impel you to take a photograph of him. No—the proper result of the realization of the beauty of Nature is the storing up in your soul of the memory of it, and the resolve to give to your work a like perfection of beauty and fitness. Copying nature is no more a part of the business of the craftsman than analysing nature is part of the business of the saint. Representation is no more important in a work of art than beauty is in a photograph. Representation is only important when the artist is under contract to supply it, and then it is as craftsman rather than as artist that he essays it. If you undertake to paint a portrait of a person, obviously you will be acting dishonestly if you demand payment for a painting that does not resemble your customer. If you undertake to make a crucifix you will act dishonestly if you supply an object which bears no resemblance to a man upon a cross. If you undertake to make a set of stations of the cross it is necessary that your panels shall represent the several scenes of the Passion, but the exact degree of representation, of photographic accuracy, of anatomical exactitude required or desirable, it is not possible to determine. It will be suffi-

cient to notice that the degree of representation will be in exactly inverse proportion to the religious fervour of the artist or his epoch. There is no doubt whatever that portraiture and naturalistic painting, sculpture and music are always found concurrently with the decay of dogmatic religion. An interest in and enthusiasm for the imitation of natural effects is always the accompaniment of a decay in interest and enthusiasm for divine truth. All ages and nations bear witness to this fact. Naturalism has always and everywhere been the sign of religious decay.

The achievements of ancient Greece in her last phase, and the achievements of the period called the Renaissance, glorious as they may appear, have had a poisonous effect upon the world which has admired them. For the religious quality in those works (we are not referring to their subject matter but to their intrinsic quality), which they inherited from their predecessors, is not the quality for which they were immediately found admirable. They were admired, and are still admired, for the completeness with which they made the conquest of nature, for the perfection of their humanism, for the success with which, like clever comedians in a theatre, they reflected and enshrined man's admiration of himself. "Thus the Christian imagination of the men of the Renaissance projected its own mental image on the clouds . . . and, without knowing it, admired itself in a world which was nothing but its own reflection¹." The

¹ Kurth, 'The Church at the Turning Points of History,' trans. V. Day, p. 125

history of art since the sixteenth century has been a faithful reflection of the progress of the world from one infidelity to another, and to-day we find ourselves at the nadir. Politically we must either again embrace slavery or set our faces towards a complete reversal of the existing social system. Morally we must declare ourselves hedonists, or again set up Christianity as our rule. And as workmen and artists we must declare ourselves to be merely the lap-dogs of the rich and the white-washers of sepulchres or, again becoming obedient, refuse the flattery of ourselves and our customers, and, beginning again at the beginning, concern ourselves solely with our work, and apply to it, at every moment, the test question: "Am I doing this because it is right, good and beautiful in itself, or because thus it pleases me or my customers that I should do it?"

This test, which in a simple and more innocent age is applied almost without thought, is to-day only applied with the utmost difficulty. Examination of conscience, which among simple people requires little mental exertion, becomes among self-conscious people, deprived of habitual religious orientation by centuries of religious decay, a matter of extreme difficulty. They either struggle in the pot of self-doubt which is called scrupulosity or destroy themselves in the fire of self-justifications. But if it be difficult to apply the test to ourselves and to our own work, it is comparatively easy to apply it to the works of others and to the works of the past, and even if all our own personal predilections are opposed to them and they seem utterly gaunt and unpleasing,

we cannot fail to observe that, whether pleasant or not, the work of religious periods owes whatever value it has to its intrinsic merits, and not to its subject matter, its cleverness or its mimicry of nature.

The word 'conventional' best expresses the universal character of all really religious art—religious, that is, not by reason of its subject matter, but by reason of its devotion to absolute values. A dead convention is the devil. Far better be blatantly sentimental and voluptuously naturalistic. But just as a creed is an intellectual convention, and a liturgical worship is conventional worship, so all really godly art is conventional, and the devilishness of a dead convention lies in its lip-worship and hypocrisy, in its pretence of worship where there is really only flattery and commercialism. The sham gothic of the twentieth century is such a dead conventionalism, and the clergy and laity who delight in it are only less to blame than the artists who practise it and the ecclesiastical furnishers who make a paying business out of it.

For what is convention? It is, as the word implies, a coming together and agreement. It is, in art, the enshrining of the universal in the particular, so that in a conventional rose all roses are resumed. It is the art of children, and of such is the Kingdom of Heaven. For it is the grown-up person who is interested in his own reflection in the mirror, and would rather see himself with all his wrinkles and idiosyncrasies than any generalization of form such as the child intuitively envisages and creates. Only those who

manage to preserve, in whom the grace of God preserves their childhood, are capable of this self-abnegating attitude of mind. It is for this reason that women have so rarely been even mediocre artists (and the thousands of young women who to-day cultivate the arts show no talent for anything but the making of pretty imitations of natural scenes or objects) for they are by the nature of their calling as mothers impelled to a more material responsibility—an impulse which clings to them even when, as in the cloister or in business or professional life, they forego the actual bearing and rearing of children. And commercialism makes women of us all, so that in our concern for the material things of life, even men, who at all ages are more childish and even childlike than women, lose their power of creation, and become immersed in the mere gossip and anecdotage of 'representative' art.

In a commercial age all absolute values are forgotten, and the value of anything is reckoned in pounds, shillings and pence. Pious people are infected by the prevailing disease, and though they would strenuously deny that their morals are merely utilitarian they display the quality of their minds in their love of the merely pretty and pleasing in art. They are incapable of appreciating anything hard, or definite, or dogmatic. They are like the Anglican or Dissenter who objects to the Mass because it is said in Latin. He does not go to church to give but only to get, and in the same way we expect the artist to minister merely to our pleasure, and have no conception that all works of art are acts of worship

in which it is necessary that both artist and beholder take part. When confronted with the works of religious ages (e.g. the tenth century) we console ourselves by saying that this was a coarser age, an age full of quaintness and naïveté but deficient in skill and refinement, and we fondly believe that the people of that age would have made accurate copies of nature if they had been clever enough. But it is not copying that is difficult, but invention, and to derive enjoyment from the use of the senses demands no great effort from anyone. Anything that requires effort for its understanding, and concentration beyond the inclination of a people brought up on the cinematograph and the illustrated newspaper, anything that does not merely flatter them, anything that demands the least asceticism, the least curbing of their insatiable lust for the pleasure of eye or ear they reject, calling it gloomy or uncouth or mad. They even call it immoral or diseased, as if anything could be less moral or more diseased than the wantonness and frivolity of the Royal Academy and the ecclesiastical furniture-shop. They are like a man who should excuse himself for swearing by saying that, at any rate, he did not beat his wife excessively; for they seem to think that mortification is only asked of them in matters of the bed and the stomach, and that they may revel in any kind of spiritual frivolity that is put before them.

The cure for this modern obsession with mere representation in art is a realization that the Catholic faith is "like the sun which must penetrate everything to vivify every-

thing; that there is such a thing as Christian aesthetics just as there is Christian politics and Christian economics; that the beautiful, like the true and the good, is one of the aspects of the Supreme Being, God; and that in art, as in nature, nothing is beautiful which does not bear on its brow the reflection of the uncreated Beauty¹”; and, further, that this christian aesthetic implies, not, as most writers have made out, that works of art reach their highest eminence when in them is achieved the closest verisimilitude, but that the greatest achievements of art are those in which man, given a thought in itself true and an occasion in itself good, apprehends and creates a form in itself beautiful.

In this respect it is true to say that a plain piece of black and white chequer embroidery is often a thing of greater beauty than the stained-glass saints and white marble angels with which we think to honour God in our churches, but with which we only succeed in pleasing ourselves or alienating our friends. A naturalistic and sentimental representation of an angel or a water-fall may be a very interesting and even useful object, but its proper place is in a museum or a cupboard, and not upon the wall of a building. For it is as out of place on a wall as a colloquialism in the creed², or as the four and twenty live blackbirds in the pie. Such things are altogether too unconventional and might very well be reserved for odd moments of amusement on a ‘bank’ holiday. A healthy life is a religious life, and a religious life

¹ Kurth, *op. cit.* p. 124

² E.g. I put my money on God = I believe in God.

is a conventional life—a liturgical life. Our present pride in unconventionality is a sign of our irreligion.

But it must not be supposed that I am set upon reviving religion for the sake of convention, or even for the sake of the Kingdom of Heaven on earth. I am simply stating the fact that these modern phenomena are evidences of irreligion. The primary intention of this essay is to show that the evidence of religion is not only moral and intellectual, but also aesthetic, and I have taken the Song of Solomon as an example because it enjoys a reputation which, were it not one of the canonical books, it would never in this age be thought to merit, and is, therefore, a challenge both to believers and unbelievers.

Now, that the Song of Solomon is a religious poem by its intrinsic quality should be clear to anyone who having the decency to divest his mind of all inclination to search out naturalistic meanings for obviously conventional statements, allows himself to bathe, so to say, in the contemplation of its formal perfection. In viewing the picture representing Our Lady of Perpetual Succour, of which a copy is to be seen in most Catholic churches, there is hardly a possibility that the observer will be led to any indulgence in illicit imaginings. He can, therefore, view such a picture in as naturalistic a manner as he will without fear of reproach. He may derive no particular benefit from so doing, but, at any rate, he will come to no violent harm. But the Song of Solomon is so thoroughly without clothing that if it be religious only by interpretation and not also by intrinsic

quality, it can only be called indecent, and it would be a gross thrusting of an occasion of sin before the innocent to allow it to appear in a vernacular Bible. We may take it, however, that the fact of its so appearing is tantamount to a statement by Holy Church that this poem does not depend solely upon interpretation for its religious value, and we may rejoice in her wisdom, knowing that no other authority on earth would dare to proclaim the Song of Solomon to be a thing of beauty as well as a thing of truth. It is also an earnest of future fruitfulness, for, while the Song of Solomon remains, poets and artists, as well as priests and philosophers and saints, may be encouraged to sing the praise of God as loudly, and to know that, whoever else may spurn them, the Catholic Church will not deny that all good things are types of the divine Goodness, and that beauty is not achieved by making things like things, but by making things like God.

OF THINGS NECESSARY AND UNNECESSARY

HUMAN life is in any case a melancholy business, tragedy is more truly the note of it than joy, and we are nearer sanity when we are filled with a sense of the disorder in our souls and in our cities than when, for a moment numbed by food or sleep, we walk oblivious of our weak untidiness.

It behoves us then to save what we may from the welter and first of all our souls and, to this end, putting up as well as possible with the inferior stuff supplied to us for bread, for, suicide being sin as well as crime, we must eat and drink such things as they set before us, putting up, I say, with American flour and Lancashire cotton, we can at least avoid the blasphemy of Bird's Custard Powder and the fripperies of Mappin and Webb.

We are not responsible for what other people do or make, but we are responsible for what we do ourselves, and buying is a thing done. If, upon strict examination of the matter, I conclude that I need bread, I do not sin in buying even bad bread. But I do a scandalous thing if I buy a bad thing which I do not need.

It is commonly said that it is more important that necessary things should be of a good quality than that unnecessary things should be good—that we should make sure of getting good bread even if we cannot get good custard. Upon the other hand there are excellent reasons why we should get

bad bread if we cannot get good, whereas there is no reason why we should get any custard at all if it be not good.

It is not true, therefore, to say that it is more important that necessary things be good than unnecessary things, for it is clear that there is no point in the existence of unnecessary things unless they be good.

It is truer to say that unnecessary things should be good than that necessary things should be good, for inferior bread will at least serve to keep man from starvation whereas bad custard serves only to damn his soul in hell.

“Man does not live by bread alone.” And in saying this our holy Lord did not mean merely that man has need also of beef and beer. Clearly he meant that man does not live only that life which bread subserves, but another life also, and one ministered to by spiritual food.

What we call necessary things in common speech are those things which subserve the life of man upon earth—food, clothing, shelter and warmth. And these things are indeed necessary, for the body is the principle of individuation and worthy, therefore, of preservation. “For I know that my redeemer liveth . . . and in my flesh shall I see God, my saviour. Whom I myself shall see . . . and not another.”

But as those things called ‘necessary’ are ordained to earthly life as their end, so earthly life is itself ordained to an end, and that end is God. Therefore the things called unnecessary are so called either because earthly life has no need of them or because God has none. But if a thing be made of which neither man nor God has need, why should

it be made at all? There is no answer to this. The only reason for the existence of a thing which does not subserve earthly life is that God needs it.

Now custard is of this kind. Man can do very well without it here below. But God is the great consumer of custard, and he made man chiefly to the end that sweets should grow in Paradise.

What is it to God that man should be born and grow and wallow in his own sensations? I am not arguing with those who do not believe in God. Let them wallow. Let them have their finery. Let them cover themselves all over with machine-made ornamental buttons and spend their time looking at themselves in the mirror, neither seeing nor smelling their own beastliness. Let them fill themselves with patent food and smack their lips. Let them fall down and worship before the Queen Victoria Memorial. Let them go to war with their neighbours and destroy one another in millions in order to obtain new markets for the sale of their buttons and biscuits. That is not the tragedy of human life—that is its appropriate comedy!

But those innocents—those simple-minded, who unwittingly encourage the manufacture of inferior ornamentalities—what can be done to stop their buying of rubbish? Why should good Catholic men and women imitate the habits of unbelievers? Why should good housewives put bad custard on the top of good pudding?

But let it not be supposed that necessary things may without blame be made ill. That is not my argument. My argument is simply this—that if we be unable to make what we need and must therefore buy, there is no blame if, being unable to buy good things, we buy bad things, provided the things be necessary.

But, upon the other hand, when we buy unnecessary things our responsibility is greater, for unnecessary things are either ordained to God, or have no right to exist.

If, then, we buy unnecessary things we become responsible for them, as though we had made them ourselves, and if we buy such things, knowing them to be inferior or bad, we merit the reward of blasphemy.

For what is the purpose of a thing which, though unnecessary for earthly life, is yet of no heavenly significance? Its purpose can only be the service of Mammon. We buy such things merely to please ourselves, as they are made to flatter us. Hundreds of thousands of such things, which we use to deck ourselves out with, or with which we think to ornament our houses or to titillate our stomachs, are obviously inferior or bad. We know this is so, but we do not pause to consider the blasphemous nature of our action in making ourselves responsible for their existence. We cannot claim the excuse that they are necessary to support life. The most we can say is that without them we should appear uncouth or impoverished to our neighbours. It is right and good that we should wish to appear well. But it is absurd to be content with the mere appearance—more especially

when it is only the less perspicacious of our neighbours who are thus deceived. The only result is that we succeed in deceiving the foolish and in enriching evil-minded merchants and manufacturers. Is that the height of ambition?

Nevertheless there is, indeed, some danger of priggishness in those who are very consciously critical of the quality of the things they buy, and not everyone can be expected to know at a glance, and without fear of error, the difference between bad and good. A certain carelessness is desirable in this as in other matters, and the saying: "*Dilige Deum et fac quod vis*" may very well be paraphrased thus:—"Love God, and buy what you like." But the first words remain the same and, where there is clearly no love of God, God-fearing people can hardly go unharmed unless they be called. All men have a vocation to life, and are bound therefore to buy bread, bad if not good, but there is no call to buy bad custard.

The evil habit of buying bad unnecessary things is necessarily prevalent in industrialized countries like England. In such countries God is unknown or forgotten, and nothing is done for his glory or in his fear. Moreover, in such a country the majority of the people are not themselves responsible workmen, being merely slaves in factories who never make more than a small part of anything. They cannot know good from bad. Most women are mere buyers nowadays, and have lost all remembrance of the life of their great-grandmothers. They cannot apply any sane criticism to the things they buy, for they have no good standard of

criticism. We are all engaged in the attempt to get something for nothing—to sell for more than we gave—to steal.

“He that stole let him now steal no more. Rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good”

NOTE. Any manufactured custard powder may be taken as synonymous with bad custard because it is doubtful (1) whether it is custard (“Mixture of eggs and milk, baked or served liquid,” ‘Dict.’), (2) whether it is good food. Such a concoction cannot therefore be classed with necessary foods.

QUAE EX VERITATE ET BONO

This is an essay in support of the contention that man's quality is chiefly exhibited in his works and that the physical form of things is determined not by caprice but by their nature and purpose: That if you take care of Truth and Goodness, Beauty will take care of itself. Truth—not science or philosophy but definition, clear-headedness, good sense. Goodness—not morality or sanctity but patience, perseverance, good will. Beauty—not ornament or 'likeness to nature' but order, unity, clarity.

IN the beginning God created Heaven and Earth, and in the fullness of time—Man. God is a trinity of Persons: Father, Son and Spirit (these names indicate as nearly as words may, in the paucity of finite speech, the eternal relationship of the divine Persons; that the concatenation is hackneyed is no proof that it is without significance), and corresponding with the Three Persons of the Blessed Trinity are the metaphysical categories, Truth, Goodness and Beauty, and all things are definable in terms of the Three-fold Divinity who created them. Man therefore is to be defined in terms of the 'what,' 'why' or 'how' of his existence.

The nature of man is likeness to God—for God created him in his image. He is a rational soul. The purpose of his existence is to know God, to serve God and to love God on earth and to be with him eternally in heaven. The

manner of man's existence is incarnation. He is spirit and matter.

Man is, therefore, a creature capable of the knowledge, service and love of God. If he can know God he must have intelligence. If he can serve God he must have will. If he can love God he must have freedom. Nothing can love which is not free. The drawing together of things which are not free is properly called affection. Man is capable of love because he has free will. Freedom is not incompatible with discipline, it is only incompatible with irresponsibility.

The object of the intelligence is the true. The object of the will is the good. Therefore each of the two faculties, intellect and will, has its corresponding object. And freedom also has its proper object namely—love.

But though in thought these things are separable, in reality they are not so. Thus we cannot say of a thing: This is true but it is neither good nor lovely; we cannot say: This is good but it is neither true nor lovely; nor can we say: This is lovely but it is neither true nor good. In reality everything has a threefold significance for everything combines in itself Truth, Goodness and Beauty, and everything may be defined by its intellectual content, by its moral content, or by its aesthetic content. The discovery of Truth is in answer to the question What (is it)? of Good to the question Why? and of Beauty to the question How? i.e. in what manner?

For as there are three Persons in one God, so there are necessarily three qualities in every one thing: truth, good-

ness, beauty, and as the Holy Ghost proceeds from the Father and the Son so beauty proceeds from truth and goodness. Beauty cannot exist by itself but proceeds from truth and goodness, as physical shape proceeds from Being and Purpose; and Love from Knowledge and Service. Beauty is not a quality in things independent of truth and goodness but is the exhibition of truth and goodness. It is perceived intuitively and the knowledge of it is developed by contemplation.

Man's business is to know God, to serve God and to love God. Man's love of God is the necessary form of his knowledge and service. And the love of God involves the love of your neighbour and for this reason—that your neighbour, like yourself, is an image of God.

But it is not to be said: I love my neighbour; therefore I love God. But, I love God; therefore my neighbour. This is the first commandment: Thou shalt love the Lord thy God; and the second is like unto it: Thou shalt love thy neighbour—the second and dependent on the first. It may therefore be said: "Love God and do what you will"¹, but it may not be said: Love your neighbour and do what you will. Nor is the love of man an excuse for ignorance of God, neglect of his service, or absence of love for him. A certain kind of altruism is commonly made an excuse for irreligion. It is said if I do my duty to my neighbour—all is well. If I help lame dogs over stiles . . . But St Paul says, on the contrary: "Though I sell all my goods to feed the poor . . . though

¹ "Dilige Deum et fac quod vis" (St Augustine).

I give my body to be burned . . . and have not charity, it is nothing.' And Charity is first of all the love of God. If I hate my neighbour whom I have seen, how can I love God whom I have not seen? How indeed! But this does not mean that the love of your neighbour comes before the love of God, but simply that the love of God is incompatible with hatred of your neighbour, God's image.

Now if a thing have a certain nature, every offspring of that thing must have relation to that nature. So of man's work. Everything he does must have relation to his end. And man's end being the marriage of his soul with God, his work is to be judged in relation to that end. Thus if a locomotive be made to drag loads, the running on rails of that engine is to be judged valuable or not valuable in so far as it is conducive or not conducive to the dragging of loads.

How futile and how worthless, therefore, are most of the activities in which men are to-day engaged in all industrial countries! For these activities have their end not in the love of God but in the love of money. The love of money is the root of all evil because money in itself is nothing and the love of nothing is the exact opposite to the love of God. And, of the four sins marked out by God as specially crying to him for vengeance, two are sins of avarice: the oppression of the poor and injustice to employees. And the other two: wilful murder and the sin of Sodom, have the same significance—namely destruction and negation. But bearing the love of God in view, what work or play is more and what less proper to man? I say 'work or play,' for, after all,

play is more proper to man than work and it is only when work is play¹ that it is really good and right. And the reason is this: Play when consciously undertaken (when it is not merely physical exuberance) is more exactly an expression of free will than is the thing called 'work.' For the idea of work is inextricably bound up with necessity, as who should say: "I play because I wish but I work because I must." Men are generally able to see the force of this; so that even at their worst when, like American millionaires, they devote themselves wholeheartedly to money-making, they make a sport of it and the saying "There is honour among thieves" is to the same effect, for even a thief is expected to 'play the game.' Play is more proper to man than work because man's distinguishing character is that of a creature having free will. What we do in the exercise of our free will—in what way we exercise our power of choice—that is the important business.

It cannot be denied that man should seek truth rather than falsehood, good rather than evil, beauty rather than ugliness. But in the absence of divine authority in these matters man is faced with two possibilities. He can either invent a scale of values for himself—a cosmology that seems to him credible—that is, he can invent his own religion; or he can

¹ "My delight was every day playing in his sight through the round of the earth" (Proverbs viii, 30-1). "The operations of play are not ordained to anything else but are sought after for their own sake" (St Thos. Aqu. quoted by Maritain, 'Philosophy of Art,' p. 50).

deny that such a thing as absolute value exists and content himself with whatever seems obvious, convenient and pleasant; that is, he can refuse religion. For though there are many religions all of them agree in this: that absolute values exist and are discoverable and, indeed, the affirmation of absolute values is the essence of religion. That such and such is true because it is true and for no other reason; that such and such is good because it is good and for no other reason; these are affirmations of absolute value and are religious affirmations. The man who makes them has, in however limited a form, religion. And, in the same way, if it be said that such and such is beautiful because it is beautiful and for no other reason, that is an affirmation of absolute value and is a religious affirmation.

Metaphysics is the name of that science which has for its object the discovery of ultimate truth, and Ethics is the science of good conduct. Aesthetics is the science of the beautiful. Here again is a separation in thought which is not possible in reality. The philosopher's pursuit of truth is an activity which he must conduct well or ill and to which he must give physical form, beautiful or not beautiful. No man can think and do without his thought and act taking shape.

It is a notable example of the degradation to which irreligion has brought us that the word 'form' now means merely physical 'shape.' Formerly the word had a deeper significance, as when it is said "the soul is the form of the body." This ancient and scholastic use of the word should appeal especially to the workman who is in revolt against the domi-

nant materialism, for it enshrines the fact that matter is subordinate, and not, like his customers, insubordinate.

It is therefore especially the mark of the ineptitude of our time that it calls a particular class of persons artists and bids that class concern itself with beauty and denies to other men both the name and the function, as though art were merely an embellishment to civilization and the artist a purveyor of embellishments.

An artist is simply a person who, being a responsible workman, is concerned for the rightness and goodness of his work, and in whose work beauty is the measure of his concern.

The word 'right' has a double meaning. Sometimes it is used to signify moral and sometimes intellectual probity. Strictly, however, it leans to the intellectual side, as when we say of a calculation 'it is right' (i.e. correct) but cannot say 'it is good.'

But in fact all men are artists, whether farmers, stock-brokers or portrait painters, preachers, lawyers and every kind of workman, for all men are concerned with beauty, as they are with charity, however much they may forget the fact in their efforts to gain money. In spite of the blindness of those who will not see, Art is the category under which the work of man is most rightly and usefully judged, for as Truth and Goodness proceed to Beauty so do Knowledge and Service proceed to Art. Art is the 'just works' to which 'right counsel' and 'holy desire' proceed or the unjust works to which wrong counsel and unholy desire proceed.

As there is Absolute Truth and Relative Truth, and Absolute Good and Relative Good, so there is Absolute Beauty and Relative Beauty. Some deny this. Very well, that is their affair. But what cannot be denied is this: If there be Absolute Truth, Goodness and Beauty, then Relative Truth, Goodness and Beauty are comparatively unimportant and those who confine their concern to things of relative value are necessarily confining themselves to things of less importance. This is undeniable.

The distinction between absolute and relative is of the utmost importance. In Aesthetics the distinction between Absolute and Relative Beauty is the primary distinction and, in the work of men, Beauty as an absolute quality is not measured by likeness to anything on earth. Consider such a thing as an oak leaf. It is beautiful in its own right and not because it resembles any other created thing. So also of the works of men—the affirmation of absolute value is the test and it is by intrinsic quality of form that a religious work is shown.

Religious work is not properly so called on account of its subject matter or its use. That is properly called religious work in which the vision of Absolute Beauty is affirmed and expressed.

The most irreligious modern work is to be found in churches and, on the other hand, the most religious is that of the men of the so-called post-Impressionist schools; for these men have dared to proclaim in their work that worship is properly given to that which is beautiful in itself and

not to those things which please merely by entertaining us. Truly not all that can be called post-Impressionist can be called either worshipful or reverent. There are doubtless charlatans in all walks of life and many modern people are rebels and nothing more. Nevertheless, post-Impressionism in its essence is more a return to primary things than pre-Raphaelitism ever was, and as we may contrast Cimabue with Sassoferrato—the godly with the ungodly—so we may contrast Matisse with Orpen.

Mediaeval work is not to be called religious because mediaeval workmen dealt in images of saints and illustrations to Bible stories, nor because their most sublime monument is the churches they built. They dealt in those things chiefly because those were the things their customers asked of them. It would not have occurred to a mediaeval lady to have her portrait hung in the drawing-room. That would have seemed to her an impertinence and an impiety—as indeed such a thing is. It did not occur to mediaeval kings to have their portraits on their coins or seals. That would have seemed ridiculous and indecent—as indeed such things are. The mediaeval workman was not asked for portraits but symbols. There was, in his time, a different orientation of thought. The compass now points in the opposite direction. But it is wobbling. This is a period of transition. The confident scientific materialism of the Victorian period is played out. It only remains to be seen whether the nations of Europe are not played out also.

The Madonna of Cimabue is beautiful with an absolute

beauty . The Madonna of Sassoferrato is beautiful with a relative beauty and is properly called lovely, for it portrays that kind of woman who is lovable to those who love that kind of woman and in that attitude which is charming to those who are charmed by it. God is beautiful whether we love him or do not. But the taste of an apple-tart is lovely only if we taste it and love the taste. And as Absolute Beauty proceeds from Absolute Truth and Goodness so Relative Beauty, 'loveliness,' proceeds from the relatively true and the relatively good. The word Beauty is properly used as an absolute term and Relative Beauty is properly called 'lovely' for it depends upon man's affections and appetites. Most modern work is concerned merely with the lovely, for it is concerned solely with what seems true and what seems good and is therefore merely naturalistic and sentimental.

The Naturalistic is that which seems true to the appearance of nature, the Sentimental is that which seems good to the affections of men. Such, for the most part, is modern work and such is the work of all irreligious periods, all periods which, like our own, are noteworthy for the success with which they make the conquest of nature and for the zeal with which they worship Mammon as their god.

The memorial of Queen Victoria in London is typical of the sort of thing to which irreligion has brought us. Compare the sculptures on that monument with the sculptures of Chartres Cathedral, for example, or with the Egyptian idols in the British Museum. And the first thing to notice is that the difference is not one of degree but of kind. It is

not that the modern is more or less skilful than the old, but that they belong to different categories of things. The ancient workman was not attempting the same game as the modern, and judgement must be given upon spiritual rather than technical evidence. There is no lack of skill in either case. The craftsmanship of Chartres is superb and it is said that the knowledge of anatomy displayed by Royal Academicians is very profound. The difference is not in skill but in intention, and it is notable that an age like the present—materially ambitious and luxurious—always produces the same sort of sentimental naturalistic art, and an age like the twelfth century A.D.—an age chiefly remarkable for its immense spiritual enthusiasm—always produces work like that of Chartres, intensely conventional and dogmatic.

The Renaissance—the New Poverty—marks the turning point for us, and what happened then was this: Man became critic whereas formerly he had been creator. Intrinsic values gave place to extrinsic—absolute to relative. Art which formerly conformed to absolute standards of knowledge and service was replaced by work which was valuable primarily as interpretation. The artist became the interpreter and his work the mirror of the world. The painter no longer made things which were themselves an integral part of Nature. He made essays in the criticism of Nature—pro or con. The great initiators of this new adventure soon gave place to the host of mere purveyors of the lovable—persons who make their livings by supplying representations of what they and their customers like. The rise of portrait painting and land-

scape painting dates from this time, and the photograph and the picture postcard are their natural offspring.

Concurrently with this change was the great religious revolution—the New Obedience—called the Reformation. And of this again the best evidence is the things which men have made. They are inevitably the best witness. They cannot lie, and what they say is of supreme importance, for they speak of man's soul and they show who are his gods.

Overmuch reliance is placed upon documentary evidence. A man says he knows so and so to be true as he has documents 'to prove it.' Documents may prove it, or may not. There are plenty of lying documents, and very great skill and judgement is required to use them. But works are infallible guides. Even the sham gothic of the nineteenth century is a truthful witness to the fatuity of that age. You may write an elaborate series of lies on paper, but your handwriting will betray you and show what manner of man you are.

And making the inevitable expression of the Renaissance and Reformation was the great social change—the New Chastity. The man of business, formerly subordinate and controlled, now became insubordinate and uncontrollable. The Industrial Revolution saw the completion of the process. The workman became merely a tool and ceased to be a responsible initiator owning and working at his own work. Master and Man became exploiter and exploited in a world of commerce and without love.

Renaissance, Reformation, Industrialism—these three are

exactly antithetic to Poverty, Obedience and Chastity—the new to the old. The Renaissance is essentially the acclamation of man, his power and riches. The Reformation is the refusal, the denial of authority, and Industrialism, to which the Renaissance and Reformation inevitably proceed, is the whoredom in which man is exploited by man.

The period of decay which the Renaissance ushered in began about four hundred and fifty years ago. It is now past repair. We are in a sinking ship and each man must save himself. There is no question even of “women and children first” for in this matter all are equal and no man can save another’s soul.

But the occasion of despair is also the occasion of hope. For if the whole of our civilization, forgetting and denying its Catholic basis, is going rotten, there is clear necessity for beginning again at the beginning, and the discovery of first principles and primary faith is the really great adventure.

It is exactly as though we were each one a Robinson Crusoe on his desert island. The ship that brought us is on the rocks and nothing is to be saved but the tool chest and the compass. So we can start life afresh, free from the shackles of traditions long since decayed and become frivolous.

Putredini dixi: Pater meus es, mater mea, et soror mea, vermibus. Ubi est ergo nunc praestolatio mea et patientia mea? Tu es, Domine, Deus meus.

And in work, as in other matters, two things emerge clearly: Love God and love your neighbour.

Now the love of God demands that things shall be made according to absolute standards of knowledge and the love of our neighbour demands that things shall be made according to absolute standards of serviceableness. Thus quality is twofold: Things must be right in themselves and good for use. God demands the one and our neighbour demands the other.

God has the right to demand the one because he made man to that end. Our neighbour has the right to demand the other because justice demands that a man shall not eat his bread idle¹.

The absolute standard of knowledge is ultimately the nature of God. Proximately it is created nature. But this does not mean, as Mammon avers, that a particular thing in Art should imitate a particular appearance in Nature, but that a particular thing in Art should conform to the truth of its own nature. Thus that man is a fool who, laying out a garden, imitates the appearance of some natural landscape. For a garden has its own nature and the intelligent gardener knows that nature and conforms to it.

The absolute standard of serviceableness is ultimately the will of God. Proximately it is the appetites of man. But this does not mean, as Mammon avers, that the workman

¹ Justice, i.e. the absolute law of God, e.g. "If any man will not work, neither let him eat" (Thess. iii, 10). "He that stole let him steal no more, but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have something to give to him that suffereth need" (Eph. iv, 28).

must supply what man 'wants,' but that he must supply what man needs. "In so far as it (law) deviates from right reason it is called an unjust law. In such a case it is no law at all, but rather a species of violence" (Leo XIII). So with man's appetites. In so far as they deviate from good sense they are depraved and not to be considered. Thus that man is a fool who, building a house, builds it where there is a fine 'view' but no shelter. For the good builder knows that man has need of shelter, and that the best view is to be seen round the family table. To supply a want which is not a need is the prostitute's business.

But though the demands of God are the same yesterday, to-day and to-morrow, the demands of our neighbour vary from time to time and in a corrupt society he makes demands which no lover of God can or should attempt to satisfy. So the matter is not so simple. For though we must do what God demands without question, we must use every power of criticism in dealing with the frequently preposterous demands of a neighbour whose chief desire is that we shall worship him, please him, flatter him, and generally tickle his fancy. And each man is his own neighbour, for the evil we do to one another has its origin in the evil we do to ourselves.

An absolute standard of serviceableness is therefore not a standard set up by men, and the opinion of men is only trustworthy when it is founded upon the love of God. "Vade Satanas scriptum est enim Dominum Deum tuum adorabis et ille soli servies."

STONE-CARVING

THE stone-carver's job is making out of stone things seen in the mind.

A work in stone may resemble other things or it may not, but such resemblance is accidental not substantive. Representations of things seen in Nature may, undoubtedly, be made by carving, but such is not primarily the sculptor's job. For though Nature is necessarily the well-spring of all our notions of physical form and therefore copying Nature is, in one sense, inevitable, yet, properly speaking, art does not imitate nature by reproducing her but by working as she works, "*ars imitatur naturam in sua operatione*" (St Thomas Aquinas, 'Summ. Theol.' I, Q. cxvii, art. 1). The kind of sculpture which is dependent upon a close study and imitation of appearance is only very little removed from the craft of the photographer—an admirable craft, but not the sculptor's. The study of Nature is not a necessity, though the love of Nature may be such. Nature is for the workman simply a dictionary, however well-beloved and inspiring, to which he may go for reference when necessary or when he chooses. There is no natural knowledge for human beings but what comes to them by the senses. Therefore we cannot love what we have not in some way seen. Nevertheless, apart from the wide meaning to be given to the word seen, as when St Thomas says that the beautiful is that which, being seen, pleases, "*id quod visum placet*," a thing seen, in the

gross sense of "seen by the bodily eye" is but a spring-board from which the mind leaps to what it takes to be more important than the mere appearance. As a result of so leaping, especially if it be done with the whole enthusiasm of the mind, a permanent condition of spiritual elevation (*habitus*) is made, and the things of sense, though still and forever, here below, the means of all knowledge, become subordinate and no longer the ruling motive.

This process may easily be seen happening everywhere. Thus, to take a notable example, Sunday, which may be supposed to have its physical sanction in the need all men find for a periodical rest from labour, has long since ceased to be regarded merely as a rest-day. Among countless peoples it is not said: "To-morrow is Sunday, I shall not work; what shall I do?" but rather: "To-morrow is Sunday, therefore I shall go to church, therefore I shall not go to work." The modern non-christian does his best to make a merely physical use of Sunday, but he will hardly succeed. Again, how far have we departed in the matter of clothes from the merely comfortable or decent!

"That the necessities of one age become the ornaments of the next" is a cynical expression of the process by which physical things are made the spring-board for spiritual things. In point of fact it is true, but it is a statement of the less important truth and is thus in line with all the other pseudo-scientific thought of our time. In the same vein, a person is praised for being 'unconventional,' as if conventions were necessarily a weakness and a degradation. The contrary is

the truth, and though dead conventions must certainly be cast away, a society without conventions is simply a society without agreements, a society in which, through weariness, men have abandoned the hope of unity and are content to wallow in idiosyncrasy. Therefore, though the physical is always for men the starting place for thought, sometimes a return to physical things is necessary lest it be forgotten that man is matter and spirit (both real, both good and not either separately), for we may lose ourselves in spiritual pride as easily as we may besot ourselves in the delights of the flesh. Yet God is the end, as he is the cause, of all things made, and things that do not envisage God as their end are like arrows not even aimed at the target.

So, though it be true to say that man's primal instincts are for preservation and procreation, it is 'truer' to say that man's first need is God. And, though it is true to say that the artist imitates nature, it is 'truer' to say that he collaborates with God in creating.

Beauty is an absolute quality which, like Goodness and Truth, is apprehended by intuition. It behoves the workman therefore to beware of making things which savour not of the mind but of the senses. The use of living models, except merely for reference, is a very great danger; for the beauties of appearance seek to oust the beauties of thought, and concern for accuracy of anatomical representation tends to oust concern for the beauty of the work in itself.

What is important is what the workman has in his mind, not what some model has in his body. This is the attitude of

mind of all the great periods of sculpture: not what they saw but what they loved, that they carved. Truly they loved what they saw, but their seeing bent before their love as a sapling before the wind.

Now there are two ways of regarding works of sculpture. Such works may be thought of as having existed only incompletely in the mind or imagination of the workman and as having awaited completion in, and as having been dependent upon the material of which they are made, so that the man and the material are jointly and not severally responsible for the finished work, or such works may be thought of as having existed completely in the mind of the workman and as having a merely accidental relation to such stuff as he has chosen for their material embodiment.

Thus we may say that there are two kinds of works of sculpture: first, those which owe part of their quality to the material of which they are made and of which the material inspires the workman and is freely accepted by him, and, second, those which owe nothing of their quality, except by accident, to their material and, indeed, of which the material is even a hindrance to the free expression of the workman and is patronized rather than beloved by him.

Of the first kind are all primitive works and the works of barbarians. Of this kind also are the works of all those persons who are not merely designers and who are free and able to translate their own ideas or designs into the natural terms of stone.

Of the second kind are the works of those persons who are only executants in the material of which the design or model and not the finished work is made. Thus all works designed in clay by a modeller and translated into stone by an artisan are of this kind.

We are not here concerned with those who are engaged in designing things for other people to make or those who are engaged in the job of modelling clay for casting in bronze or firing in kilns, but with the ordinary workman who has in hand the job of carving stone.

There are two chief kinds of stone-carving. Just as a tailor may cut his coat according to his cloth or his cloth according to his coat, so a stone-carver may make his carving according to his stone or he may cut his stone according to the preconception of his carving which is in his mind or which is necessitated by the building or other place where his carving is to go.

Thus if you have a piece of stone you may, if you are free to do so, carve it into what shape you will; but if your carving is to fit a certain place, either in size or manner, you will have to be very sure before you begin to work, as to your measurements and as to your subject and its treatment. Therefore the two kinds of stone-carving may be called the 'unconditioned' and the 'conditioned.' Now for either of these two kinds it may be useful or necessary to make a model, but if such be made it should be made in soft stone and to some simple scale, such as "one inch to the foot" or "quarter full size," so that measurements may be easily cal-

culated from it. It is not desirable to make it to the full-size because a full-size model is not worth the labour unless the proposed carving is to be no more than a few inches high, and then a model is generally unnecessary and often undesirable.

The modelling of clay is for the stone-carver merely the means of making preliminary sketches and great facility in it is not a necessity. It is not desirable to make exact models in clay, because the sort of thing which can be easily and suitably constructed in clay may not be, and generally is not, suitable for carving in stone. The armature, that is the skeleton of iron or wood which is necessary for the support of the clay for a model of a large size, is not merely difficult to make, but has the effect of giving a quite different character to the work from that which is the natural character of carved stone. The armature, in fact, is the model—the model reduced to its simplest terms of movement and attitude.

Modelling in clay is properly not (except for such very small things as can be held and turned about in the hand) the mere pressing and squeezing of clay into a desired or approved shape. It is rather the clothing or giving of body to a skeleton. It is a process of addition; whereas carving is a process of subtraction.

The free will of the carver is not so much seen in what he has determined to cut away as in what he has determined to leave. The finished work is the result of innumerable acts of criticism and, in carving, this criticism takes the form of decision whether to cut any more away or leave it. The

finished work is what is left. Of course the same conditions apply to any work of man. God alone really makes. But in the carving crafts the condition is more obvious, and it is valuable to note that in this human condition the real nature of man's free will is seen. For it is only apparently that man does or makes any material thing. In reality and at most he only turns towards or away from good. And as in a good work we may say that it is good because thus the workman had the good sense to leave it, so the things God has made are said to last for ever because he loves them.

The proper modelling of clay results, and should so result, in a certain sparseness and tenseness of form and any desired amount of 'freedom' or detachment of parts. The proper carving of stone, upon the other hand, results, and should so result, in a certain roundness and solidity of form with no detachment of parts. Consequently a model made to the full size of the proposed carving would be, if modelled in a manner natural to clay, more a hindrance than a help to the carver, and would be labour, and long labour, in vain.

Further, it must be remembered that enthusiasm is not cheap and lightly to be expended. If a man has really devoted himself to the making of a full-size model of clay or any other material, it is hardly possible for him to face the copying of his own model in stone. He cannot do the same thing twice with the same feeling of propulsion. For that reason, if for no other, it is usual for the work of translation into stone from a full-size model of clay or plaster to be given over to an artisan who proceeds by measurements and

various mechanical contrivances called 'pointing' machines to produce an imitation in stone of a thing of which the nature is clay. The modeller then reappears and gives the finishing touches. The finished work is not a piece of carving, but a stone imitation of a clay model. If the model be good it is possible that the stone imitation may retain some of its goodness, but it must necessarily be the goodness of a clay thing. And however desirable it may appear that the work of a good clay-modeller should be made use of, it is high time that those responsible for the erection of public buildings should either use bronze castings (and what is to hinder the affixing of bronze 'sculptures' to buildings?) or else they should insist that the stone-carving should be done by the actual designer and not by hired mechanics.

Why should a process so elaborate and so unnatural be followed? It cannot be only because the making of a full-size model has used up the energy of the artist. That might happen once. But an artist who found his energy thus 'used up' would say: "A full-size model is too much of a good thing; I will make only a small model, or none at all, and save myself for the stone." Why, then, is the process of pointing not exceptional nowadays but usual? The answer is simple. It is because students are not trained in workshops to be stone-carvers, but in art schools to be modellers. There is just this excuse for them: stone-carving is not only very like hard work, especially in its preliminary stages, but it is apparently much slower. If the student has an idea, that idea is much more quickly materialized in clay than in stone.

It is not exactly that he is in a hurry, it is rather that he is feverish, that he is impatient, that he is afraid of losing the idea in the slow process of stone-cutting.

The later stages of the making of a model in clay are considerably more irksome and 'nervous,' and certainly slower, than the later stages of stone-carving. But in the early stages clay is certainly the easier and more expeditious material.

So it is that clay modelling is so much in vogue: because in the preliminary stages it produces quick results and because clay is the material in which the students are taught to work. Furthermore the use of stone in art schools is too expensive for the proprietors. It necessitates very strong benches and floors. Many more tools are required, also lifting appliances, and a new piece of stone is required for every fresh work, whereas clay can be used over and over again. Lastly, art schools are art schools and must therefore have art masters. But 'artists' are rarely stone-carvers and stone-carvers are rarely artists, so stone-carving is not taught.

All that is vital in modelling can be written in one paragraph. The model should be seen as volumes and contours joined by planes. The best modelling is done by pressing with a tool, and not by squeezing with the fingers. Modelling is the addition of clay to clay, each additional piece of clay being pressed into place with the tool. The use of the fingers is to be avoided as being too facile and as productive of accidental contours and planes. The workman may take advantage of accidents, but his method should not be provo-

cative of such. Hardness and firmness both of intention and execution should be the aim of the modeller as of all workmen, but more particularly of the modeller because of the pliability of his material and the ease with which it may seduce him.

Now we have divided works of sculpture into two kinds: those owing their nature in part to their material and those of which the material is accidental; and into two classes: the unconditioned and the conditioned. It is obvious that if you do not care in what material your idea takes shape, you might as well be a modeller as anything else. But if you are that kind of workman who finds in his material a complement to himself, and that material is stone, modelling in clay must be kept in a wholly subordinate position and be the means, merely, of making such preliminary and experimental sketches as cannot be done on paper.

I have used the word 'model' as meaning a preparatory design made in clay. There is, of course, the other use of the word, i.e. meaning a man or woman or animal used as a copy. This kind of model is even more a hindrance to the stone-carver than the one of clay, for the nature of flesh and blood is even more unlike the nature of stone.

But the making of models is not absolutely essential. Some stone-carvers may find a model desirable, some may not, or a model may be desirable in one case and not in another. There is, however, little doubt that the making of models is very much overdone at the present time. In the case of carvings in low relief, for instance, a model is generally un-

necessary, a drawing to scale being all that is required, and even that may sometimes be dispensed with.

The cause of this over-reliance on models is simple enough: the student is not trained to be a stone-carver, the stone-carver is not trained to make his own designs. The one therefore becomes a mere designer and maker of models, the other a mere executant, the one losing himself in sentiment, emotion and anecdote, the other in technical dexterity. The technical dexterity of the modern 'trade' stone-carver is considerably greater than that of the men who did the sculptures of Chartres just as the sentimentality of the modern 'artist' is considerably greater than that of the writers of the Gospels.

Truly it would be better were designer and craftsman interchangeable terms. But such a consummation is, except in the case of rare individuals, not possible under modern conditions. The very nature of modern civilization is such as to preclude it.

Our modern civilization, admirable as it may appear to be in many of its manifestations of power and good will, is, essentially, built upon the employment of the many by the few. It is a complicated system in which world-markets have taken the place of local markets, and factories the place of small workshops, the manufacturer that of the craftsman, the contractor that of the builder, and in which commerce is paramount and men of commerce our rulers.

Altogether apart from the question as to whether it is good or bad is the fact that the combination of craftsman

and designer in one individual is foreign to such a civilization and impossible in it. It is impossible because in such a civilization men are not commonly their own masters any more than they are commonly their own landlords. Ninety-nine out of a hundred are mere employees earning wages and mere tenants paying rent. Certainly there must always be some employees and some tenants; but it can be overdone!

But the question of 'good or bad' cannot be escaped, and our answer to it must be such as is natural to our own point of view as stone-carvers. We cannot make decisions for others. We must decide for ourselves.

If we are going to be stone-carvers, then we must be both craftsmen and designers. If that combination is impossible, then stone-carving is, as an occupation worthy of free men, non-existent and we must find another trade.

I am not looking at this matter from the point of view of the buyer of things; from his point of view there is little of which to complain—he buys what is put before him. He can buy nothing else. The connoisseur may be as discriminating as he likes; he cannot buy what is not for sale and what is for sale is what the shopkeeper finds, by experience, to be likely to sell, or what by skilful advertisement he can make a 'vogue' for. I am looking at the matter from the point of view of the workman, the hired stone-carver. Reform must come at his demand. He is the victim, his must be the revolution.

Men do not eat because other people kindly give them bread. They eat because they are hungry and they would

bake bread whether other people were benevolent or not. Even so, material organization and betterment must be the product of appetite and not of theory, of the men and not of their masters, of the players and not of the spectators. The modern movements of reform fail for this very reason: that they make their appeal to irresponsible persons, to manufacturers and distributors, to shopkeepers and their customers, to anyone but the person responsible for the doing of the work.

Therefore, as men have revolted and have organized with the object of gaining economic advantages, so must they revolt and organize to obtain intellectual responsibility. The trade union is merely the guardian of wages, it must become, as some mediaeval fraternities, the guardian of good quality. The control of industry is valueless unless it includes the control of design and workmanship.

But where all are agreed that the price of labour must be 'fair' very few workmen are concerned to assume or demand responsibility for the work done. It cannot be said that there is, at the present time, any widespread and articulate demand upon the part of stone-carvers that they shall be the executants of their own ideas. They are, as a rule, perfectly willing to execute any design that is put before them. They have ceased to think of themselves as responsible workmen, as free men, they accept without demur the tyranny of the architect and modeller. They either do not profess to have any ideas of their own at all, or such ideas as they have are merely those of copyists and imitators of

bygone 'styles,' and technical accomplishment is their only criterion of excellence.

In the absence then of any articulate demand for freedom and responsibility there is nothing to be done but to create such a demand. The individual must be converted that the mass may be leavened. And in the forefront of our propaganda must be proclaimed the fact that we, the workmen, the men who do the work, are the persons responsible and not the architect and designer, not the contractor, the shopkeeper or the customer.

We will not talk about art. We will demand responsibility, saying that, as we do the work, we will do it as we choose. We will sell things at our own workshops and deal directly with our own customers, and we shall leave the factory and contracting system behind us. But though we claim the right of choice, yet, the reader will note, we admit obligations. The obligations of the workman to his customer and to the community are even more obvious and natural than those of the trader—the trader being out merely to sell things, the workman to make them. Men do not naturally make things which please only themselves, they naturally consider their customers, if only to keep them amiable. But a shopkeeper will sell anything, whatever he thinks of it. He is irresponsible. He has no interest in things made other than their market value.

Beauty cannot be taught, and it is best not talked about. It must be spontaneous. It cannot be imposed. But its enemies can be destroyed. Its enemies are irreligion and

the offspring of irreligion—commercialism and the rule of the trader. The trader should be subordinate—he has become the head of the State. “Vade Satanas, laus Deo.”

I say Beauty cannot be taught. Art education is therefore impossible. The art school is no good to anyone except to those who make their livings by teaching in them. Learning about art, reading about it, museums and exhibitions, all alike are of no value to the workman. They are the occupation and invention of well-meaning theorists and of dealers. Technical institutes are a different matter. They are both valuable and dangerous. They are valuable inasmuch as they supplement workshop training though they cannot supplant it. They are a danger inasmuch as they tend to make us content with the present inadequacy of the workshop. They supply a superior workman to our employers without doing anything to hinder the development of a system which destroys workmanship. Like the art schools, they are supported by employers and by the government because better workmanship and more artistic appearance mean, so they hope, success in foreign markets.

But though technical institutes cannot supplant the workshop, they can and do supplant apprenticeship. The general decay of apprenticeship, due solely to the introduction of the factory system and quantitative as opposed to qualitative production, is more to be deplored than any other material thing which labour has suffered. The revival of apprenticeship should be one of the first endeavours of revolutionists.

No system of state-aided or benevolent technical training in schools can take its place.

The matter must be left at this bald statement of essentials. Sculpture is a matter of both workmanship and design. The combination in the same person of craftsman with designer must be revived. The revolution must come at the instance of the craftsman and not of the employer. The need is true religion and the subordination of the trader. Again: "Laus Deo, vade Satanas."

WOOD-ENGRAVING

THE 'line' block and the 'half-tone' have one clear claim to usefulness: viz. when an exact facsimile is required. It is doubtful, however, whether process reproduction would have been developed very far if its use had been confined to those occasions, and those only, when exact facsimile was of real importance. Process reproduction owes its success to its commercial possibilities more than to its real merits, for, in spite of the frequently reiterated boast of those engaged in business that nothing can be a commercial success that does not 'supply a want,' by photographic reproduction a speed and cheapness have been obtained which have seduced both artists and the public. A 'want' has certainly been supplied, but it is a want of quantity rather than of quality, and, as in all cases where quantitative ideas are the motive, quality has inevitably deteriorated so that book production has become a mere business and with no criterion save that of commercial success.

It is of course impossible to stem the tide of commercial degradation until Poverty, Chastity, and Obedience take the place of Riches, Pleasure, and Laissez-faire as personal and national ideals. Such a change of mind cannot occur merely as the result of economic or social or philosophical propaganda, the matter is more fundamental than that. The modern world is founded upon a denial of absolute values, a

denial of religion, a denial of God; upon such denials nothing can be built. Goodness becomes what the police will allow or can enforce. Beauty becomes what pleases the senses and Truth becomes what will pay.

Meanwhile it is possible for any individual that wills to do so to go out into the wilderness and to live and work in a manner more in harmony with the nature of man and the will of God. For it is in accord neither with the will of God nor the nature of man that any one should love himself more than his neighbour or his neighbour more than God. The present state of affairs is an unnatural and abnormal thing. It is a disease. And any one can by the grace of God cure at least himself and put his own affairs in order.

In the domain of art the remedy is the same as in any other. The thing good in itself must be found and loved. Relative values must give place to absolute, the lovely and lovable to the beautiful. Does it pay? is not the question. Is it good in itself?—that is the important thing. And the more you apply that standard to your own work and to that of others, the more you will find the necessity of personal responsibility.

But personal responsibility for work done is, from the point of view of commercial success, actually an evil! Make men responsible for their work and not merely for doing what they are told; make their own consciences their masters and the whole of our modern factory system will come tumbling down like a house of cards. For the factory system is a servile system in which personal responsibility is denied and of no factory article may you say: This is the

work of such an one—he made it. In the matter of drawing and illustration and engraving degradation is inevitable when one man draws, another touches up the drawing, another photographs, another touches up the negative, another prints it on the metal, another etches, another touches up the etching, another routs it, another mounts it, another proves it and another keeps the accounts and, to crown all, another takes the profits. This excessive subdivision is inevitable where profit-making is the motive. It is, however, the artist and the workman who are to be blamed, not the man of business. The man of business does his job very well. Certainly he has no right to be ruler, as he is at present, but it is our fault for allowing him to rule. And as good men must precede good law, and not vice versa, so the individual must revolt against the evil system and not wait until the many are prepared to revolt with him.

Wood-engraving and wood-cutting have gone out of general use not because photographic process reproduction is better, or even because it is cheaper and quicker, but simply because larger profits can be made by employing many persons under a system of divided labour than by working in a small workshop and putting the quality of the work before the quantity of the output. The consumer or customer is flattered and his grosser appetites appealed to. The merchant does not ask himself what good thing he can supply but what he can supply at a good profit. The responsibility for the making of things is not in the hands of the workman but solely in those of the man of business.

The advantage of wood-engraving then is that it does away with several sets of middlemen and places responsibility upon the shoulders of the workman. The workman who draws, engraves and prints his own blocks is master of the situation. He can blame nobody but himself if his work goes wrong. Whether it goes right or wrong depends upon his notions of right and wrong. The first thing is that he should be free to satisfy his own conscience and not be a mere tool in the hands of another. "*Liber est causa sui, servus autem ordinatur ad alium;*" "The freeman is responsible to himself—but for the slave someone else is responsible."

Another advantage of wood-engraving is that it forces upon the workman some respect for the thing in itself and makes it impossible for him to place a merely relative value upon the art of drawing. Mere likeness to nature is much more easily achieved by drawing, whether in line or wash, upon paper. The graver and the wood both of them make their own demands and make mere imitation of nature almost impossible. The workman is compelled to consider his work primarily as an engraving and only secondarily as a representation. This is a good thing, for a work of art is primarily a thing of beauty in itself and not a representation of something else however beautiful that other thing may be. This the public does not understand; hence the absurdity of allowing the public to be supplied by persons who are not workmen and who have no knowledge of the implications of good workmanship but are simply men of business out to supply whatever is most profitable to themselves.

He who would be an engraver must therefore start with a clear understanding that there is no 'money in it'; though if he be patient and devoted he may make a living or a part of a living by it. Further, he must be prepared to start with the wood and the graver and his sense of what is beautiful in itself and not strain after effects. He should take it for granted that a zig-zag pattern such as a child would engrave is better than the most expert imitation of a sunset. In fact he must be prepared to begin at the beginning and to put the first things first.

INDIAN SCULPTURE

THE art of sculpture as formerly practised by the peoples of India is, in epitome, an exhibition of all that British rule, there, as in England, must inevitably destroy. This may be for many a matter for considerable rejoicing, for, like the Romans in their decline, and for that matter, as it seems, throughout the whole of their history, the British people, though mitigating its appetite for commercial power by a sense of justice and fair play, is almost totally blind to any absolute value in Beauty.

Admirable as it may appear to be in many of its achievements, a civilization submitting to the widespread and predominant use of mechanical contrivances, whose sole claim to existence is the supposition that by their means things can be made in greater quantity for the same expenditure of time and money, is a civilization wilfully denying itself the possession of things of Beauty, and destroying in itself both the power to produce such things and the ability to recognize them when they are produced.

Those of us who are concerned for the existence of Beauty in the world are often accused, by so-called practical men of business, of a lack of disinterestedness. It is supposed that we desire Beauty because we are artists, and that were we not artists we should be as indifferent in the matter as they are. It is supposed that as the cocoa-manufacturer wages war against the drinking of beer, because he may thus hope

to increase the sales of his cocoa, and it is not to be supposed that he can have any other motive, so the artist wages his 'forlorn hope' against commercialism because thus he may hope to increase the sales of works of art. The fact is, however, that we are artists because we believe in Beauty, and not that we believe in Beauty because we are artists.

What then is this Beauty in which we believe—what is its value and, as regards the subject of this essay, what is the value of Indian sculpture? Beauty is that order in things which we perceive to be in itself and at once both right and good. It is perceived by intuition, and the knowledge of it is developed by contemplation. Right—that is true to the nature of things and to its own nature. Good—that is well known, well done, according to the purpose of things and to its own purpose. Beauty proceeds from Truth and Goodness as the Holy Ghost proceeds from the Father and the Son, and as these three are one so Truth, Goodness and Beauty are one.

Let us examine this doctrine by an example. Let us consider, for instance, a pair of bellows. What is the nature of this thing? What is this thing? It is space enclosed by moveable sides such that whatever is enclosed within it is expelled through an aperture by the pressing together of the sides. Such is the nature of bellows. But the materials of which it be made have each their own nature. Thus wood has a nature different from that of iron, and, therefore, impatient of being worked in a manner out of harmony with its nature. So a bellows would not be 'right' if it did not

expel what was enclosed, and, further, a wooden bellows would not be right if the wood were treated as though it were iron, and, further still, a wooden bellows would not be right if it were out of harmony with the nature of man, its user, and with his destiny! But a man may know all this about bellows and yet fail to make a good bellows because he has not exercised his will to do so. The knowledge of the nature of things must be enforced by the will to act accordingly. The true is the object of the intelligence, the good is the object of the will.

Suppose a workman has knowledge of his job and will to put that knowledge into practice (assuming that he has the necessary physical skill or tools—these things again having their own nature and goodness) the product of his labour is inevitably beautiful, and that beauty is immediately knowable and desirable.

But, it may be urged, a man may have a complete knowledge of drains and the will to put that knowledge into practice, and yet no one could call a drainage system beautiful. Not visibly beautiful, no, for it is not the nature of drains to be visible. And beauty is not always seen by the bodily eye. It is absurd, therefore, to say that drains are an ugly sight when they are not there to be looked at. But the knowledge of the nature of things, as will be seen by the foregoing, is a very profound business, for it involves the knowledge of God and of the nature and end of man. The exercise of the will in correspondence with that knowledge is also a fundamental business, for it involves the hope of

God. It is for this reason that charity is called greatest, for it is charity that makes possible the manifestation in action of faith and hope.

The Holy Ghost proceeds from the Father and the Son, that is to say, he is the responsible and therefore personal principle of the mutual love of the Father and the Son. In God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost are equal—none is the greatest. But in the works of man charity is called the greatest because, while man's knowledge is necessarily imperfect, inasmuch as his nature is limited, and his desire is imperfect inasmuch as the object of it is imperfectly known, man's charity is not necessarily imperfect, for it is the product of intuition and not of reasoned knowledge, and is independent of his limitations.

It may now be seen that when we say: Beauty proceeds from Goodness and Truth we are saying much more than that Beauty is the product of technical knowledge and physical determination, though both these things are necessary to its material exhibition. To be sure! It is Love that is needed, and first the Love of God. Proximately a work of art is simply "a thing well made"—ultimately it is the sensible expression of man's love of God, and in every work of man Beauty is its essential perfection.

Beauty is therefore a thing of religious significance, ineffable, independent of fashion or custom, time or place, and not to be judged by the material criteria of a commercial civilization, or by the threadbare culture of a place-hunting governing class.

Now for the sculpture of India, we may claim at once that it is, generally and as opposed to modern European sculpture, the work of men who believed in the absolute value of Beauty. It is the work of men who regarded Beauty not merely as a thing ministering to man's comfort and pleasure, but as a thing having a value utterly independent of any pleasure it might give to men or of any power it might have of making human life endurable.

It is not to be denied that works of art do in fact give pleasure, and do in fact make life endurable—it is only to be denied that such giving is primarily the function of the artist. Nor is it to be denied that such works as those of the Indian sculptors are pleasing. It is only because of their denial of the absolute value of Beauty that English people do not as a rule find pleasure in them. We have become so accustomed to regard the artist merely as a purveyor of the lovable—the priest as a moral policeman—the philosopher as a sort of “young man's guide to useful knowledge”—that we are incapable of viewing justly the work of men who regard the artist, the priest and the philosopher as prophets of God.

It is not only the works of eastern and of alien peoples that we view thus unjustly. We do the same injustice to the work of pre-Renaissance and post-Impressionist artists in Europe. We are blind to the beauty in the drawings of children—we see nothing in them but the quaint and ingenuous. We find no value in anything unless we can weigh it in the scales of human comfort. Thus we say that an un-

happy marriage is no marriage and that an unpleasant thought cannot be true. Whereas God is just, as well as merciful, and what God has joined cannot be put asunder.

In this matter of Indian sculpture we say that, because few men have more than two arms, therefore an idol with ten arms is ugly—forgetting or not knowing that verisimilitude has no necessary connection with either Beauty, Goodness or Truth. We say that because, from the point of view of marrying, a woman with a figure like that of the Venus de Medici is more desirable, therefore the wide-hipped, globe-breasted images of Pattini are necessarily ugly, bad and false. We go to a game of football and blame the players for infringing upon the rules of cricket. We apply the standards of a mechanical and godless commercialism to works which are both man-made and godly. We can, however, claim the virtue of inconsistency, for we have not hitherto to any large extent denied the worth of any but imitative music, though the modern development of programme music may very likely lead us to do so, and we do not as a rule insist that all words shall be onomatopoeic.

How can we see that in which we do not believe, and what would be the good if we could? The connoisseur's appreciation leads nowhere but to an aesthetic snobbery, to the apotheosis of the dealer in works of art and to the filling of our museums. Such appreciation does nothing to stem the tide of destruction—the destruction not merely of things of beauty: that is comparatively unimportant—such appreciation does nothing to recreate in the people that attitude

of mind in which alone Beauty is credible, and to recreate in the life of the people those conditions under which alone the production of things of beauty is possible.

The appreciation or depreciation of Indian sculpture or of any other sculpture or of any artistic productions is now a matter of very little importance, for any attempt to obtain either is in effect locking the stable after the departure of the horse. All the best sculptures of India are old and most of them are broken. Nothing is now being produced except more or less insipid copies. Like our own firms of ecclesiastical image-makers, the bazaars of India are now showing nothing new that is not either frankly bad or simply the product of the gradually lessening momentum of the traditions of the past.

The business then of reformers and of revolutionists is to give up shedding tears over the lost horse of mediaeval Europe or of any kind of ancient India—the broken cathedral of Rheims is only a material and a more than usually obvious symbol of what commercialism, whether German or British, must inevitably effect everywhere—and, appraising things at a true or truer value, to build a dyke which shall both protect what is permanent and hinder what is ephemeral.

As to what is permanent—that must be re-discovered and, as it was Christianity and the Church which was ultimately the destroyer of the physical slavery upon which the civilizations of antiquity were built, so it will be Christianity and the Church which will destroy the even worse and more devilish slavery of the mind and of the soul upon which are

built the commercial empires of to-day. And this destruction will be effected none the less surely, though the Church is not directly or by definition concerned for the existence of either Beauty or works of art.

He who would save his life must lose it, and it is not for any material advantage that a dyke must be built against commercialism. Poverty, chastity and obedience are, for men and women in the world as much as for religious, the only permanent foundations upon which to build the kingdom which is not of this world. Beauty is, even in its most humble aspect, not the expression of man's love for man, but of man's love for God. It is as an oblation and, however unconsciously, as an act of worship that man gives Beauty to the work of his hands.

“A Kingdom not of this world” and “Poverty, Chastity and Obedience”! These may sound strange watchwords for revolutionists. Consider then the alternatives: Riches, pleasure and irresponsibility and a kingdom not founded in Heaven! It is to be supposed that even a ‘practical’ man of business will see that he cannot have it both ways; but though it is perhaps of little use appealing to him—he has, at present, the bit well between his teeth—an appeal to ordinary men and women is a practical proposition.

Here then we see Indian sculptures. We see them to be beautiful—if sometimes to western eyes unlovely. We see the civilization which produced them long since decayed and replaced by the mechanical ‘good government’ of an alien and commercial people. We see this commercialism

not as a thing in accordance with the will of God, but as a pestilent disease and disgrace, a thing inseparable from the servile conditions and spiritual slavery of vast masses of human beings, and a thing destructive not only of freedom, but of every kind of good quality in the work of men.

The industrialization of India is thus seen to be no more a wrong done to Indians than industrialism in England is a wrong done to the English. It is but one of many symbols of a prevailing corruption—a corruption which it is beyond human power to cure.

A WAR MEMORIAL

THE Gospel records the occasion upon which God, in the person of Christ, used violence to enforce his will. Thus for all time the use of violence in a just cause is made lawful. Violence may not always be expedient, it may always be the last resource, but it cannot be called forbidden.

Hence a representation of the turning-out of the money-changers was chosen for a war memorial, for it commemorates the most just of all wars—the war of Justice against Cupidity—a war waged by Christ himself¹.

TREATMENT OF THE SUBJECT

In the sculpture at Leeds the figures are clothed in modern clothes because (1) the point of the sculpture is ethical rather than historical or archaeological. The ‘terms of reference’ of the artist were not to make a picture of ancient Jerusalem (a thing he could not have done in any case—having no expert historical knowledge) but to do what has always been done in times and places where art has had a real connection with life, namely to represent a given subject as though it were happening to-day. (2) There is also an ‘artistic’ reason for the representation of modern English clothes rather than ancient eastern ones. It is this: that the natural subject for the artist’s manipulation is what he sees around him, what he has lived with and is intimate with, what he knows, rather

¹ Vide John ii, 14 and James v, 1

than what he can learn by reading, or by studying in museums or by copying nude men and women. Reading is very misleading. Museums, full of the works of the past, destroy a keen sense of the needs of the present. Nude models are mostly fools and can only stand in stereotyped attitudes, and their bodies are covered with dimples and creases and lovely things you cannot carve in stone and which only lead you astray and make you forget the beauty of stone in your admiration at the beauty of flesh.

The sculptor is not an archaeologist, still less a fancy-dress maker. Rather is he allied to the tailor and cutter, and his job, when he has a given subject to represent, is to make, not a photographic imitation, but a stone version of what he sees around him, and the stonier it is the better, for stone is his material. As for beauty—look after goodness and truth, and beauty will take care of itself; for beauty is the mutual love of the good and the true, and it proceeds from goodness and truth as the Holy Ghost proceeds from the Father and the Son.

AS A WORK OF ART

The memorial is primarily an 'illustration.' It is a piece of stone-carving and therefore must not be criticized as if it were Royal Academy sculpture or a photograph from Nature. The critics may or may not find beauty in it—but they might as well try, and fail, as fail by not trying. Let them only remember that beauty is neither a matter of mere 'likeness to nature' on the one hand, nor of sentimental expressiveness on the other.

DESCRIPTION OF THE SCULPTURE

The sculpture consists of five stones joined together to make one panel. The background is cut into arches as of the wall of a large building.

Christ (with a halo, in case there should be any doubt as to his identity) is dressed in a priest's alb with tasselled cord. He wears thick boots because he is 'a priest for ever'—not only in Jerusalem A.D. 30. He is driving the crowd of financial experts with a whip made by unravelling a piece of seven-stranded cord. There is a strand for each of the seven deadly sins, the first of which is Vanity and whose origin is Pride. Behind him is the hound of St Dominic (*Domini canis*—the dog of the Lord) who is calling up the followers of Christ to continue the good work. This particular symbol of the Church is chosen because the Dominicans stand especially for Truth and it is untruth rather than illwill which is damning the modern world. A fallen cash-desk appears behind.

Immediately in front of Christ and at his feet, a woman is sitting with her child in her arms. She is taking no notice of the ejection of the money men. She knows it is nothing to do with her.

At the other end of the group is a Fashionable Woman. She is probably the wife of the Pawnbroker who is following her. In one hand she carries her vanity bag (appropriately so called), in the other she grasps the sign of her husband's trade which between them they are naturally trying to carry off to set up elsewhere. She has two beautiful feathers in her

hat and nice bobbed hair. Her husband, the pawnbroker, is a thick sort of man. His face is the only one with any modelling in it. This was unintentional. There wasn't room for his left foot without putting it in a bit of a hole. The young man behind him is probably his Clerk. He is carrying the account-books. 'L.S.D.' is inscribed on one of them. He seems rather pleased that his master is on the run. This facial expression came by accident and seemed providential. His hair is rather long. He is stumbling over a fallen stool.

The next man, carrying his hat, is probably a Politician. He appears to be putting his speech back into his pocket. The next two men are nondescript Financiers of whom there has not yet been anything discovered except that they don't look as annoyed as their attitudes would suggest. They are both rather 'fat' men. Between their feet an account-book has fallen.

All the men, except the clerk, are wearing frock coats, boots and spats. The spats seemed to the artist an appropriate footwear for the class of person represented. Furthermore, his courage failed him at the thought of carving the laces on so many pairs of boots. The straps of the spats were forgotten and were put in at the last moment.

The nationality of the various persons has not yet been definitely ascertained. The artist suspects it to be varied. There are 'money-changers' in all civilized countries, and modern war, in spite of the patriotism of millions of conscripts and their officers, is mainly about money—for the "white man's burden" consists chiefly in the effort to

bestow the advantages of 'civilization' upon "those unenlightened 'natives' who happen to be living where gold or oil is available."

N.B. Most of the details given were discovered in the work by the artist's friends. The artist does the work, the critic has the inspiration.

THE INSCRIPTIONS

- (1) Along the cornice is inscribed:

Agite nunc, divites, plorate ululantes in miseriis vestris, quae advenient vobis. Divitiae vestrae putrefactae sunt.

- (2) In the panel above the dog:

Et cum fecisset quasi flagellum de funiculis, omnes ejecit de templo, et numulariorum effudit aes, et mensas subvertit. Et dixit: nolite facere domum Patris mei domum negotiationis.

(1) (Vulgate, James v, 1) "Go to now, you rich men, weep and howl in your miseries which shall come upon you. Your riches are putrid."

(2) (Vulgate, John ii, 15) "And when he had made as it were a little whip of cords, he ejected all from the temple, and the money of the money-changers he poured out and overthrew their tables. And he said: Do not make my Father's house a house of commercialism."

THE REVIVAL OF HANDICRAFT

“Operatio sequitur naturam...homo est id quod est secundum rationem.” (St Thomas Aquinas, ‘Summ. Theol.’):

“As one is one does...and it is by his rational nature that man is what he is.”

THE revival of handicraft, in an age in which the main enthusiasm is to render handicraft unnecessary and in a country now almost completely dependent upon machine facture, seems either a forlorn hope or an idle fancy. Upon the one hand we have the efforts of merchants and inventors to supplant the hand by the machine—for so, it is hoped, the cost of production will be reduced, the quantity increased and labour troubles done away—upon the other we have a small country with a vast population which can only be maintained by an output of saleable goods so vast that only machinery can cope with it. There would seem to be no escape; and, were it not for the fact that the state of things is obviously disastrous to the quality both of the things produced and of the men who produce them, there would be no need to think escape desirable. But not everyone is blind to quality. Not everyone finds it possible to wallow comfortably in mere quantity. Not everyone finds the notion of Empire sufficiently alluring to hide an obvious corruption. Moreover, discontent among factory ‘hands’ is frequent and widespread. The present state of

things cannot endure even if we desired it. It is bad both for the work and the worker; and, in the long run, bad work will not sell, and unhappy men will not work.

The nature of the change to be effected depends upon the nature of the thing to be changed and upon the nature of the agent effecting the change; and it is precisely because there is no unanimity as to the natures of things that reformers and revolutionists proceed merely from one unhappy experiment to another; while the ship of State, running before the wind of mere avarice, gathering increased momentum, shivers from shoal to shoal, nothing hindered or helped by the fact that she is now accompanied by a host of lesser craft who call her Motherland. They and she together are running to perdition.

Union is Strength, and unanimity is the greatest strength of all! It is the unanimity of the forces promoting corruption that makes them strong—well nigh invincible. To such a unanimity another must be opposed. But that is the trouble. The forces of good are divided and subdivided; the forces of evil, by reason indeed of their very unconsciousness, are united. The world is not consciously and of set purpose going to the devil; it is going to the devil because it is not consciously and of set purpose going to God. "He that gathereth not with me scattereth." And there can be no set purpose Godwards without unanimity in the things of God. And such unanimity is nowadays declared impossible!

We are dealing with matters of fundamental importance.

Let that be understood at the outset. We are not discussing what we shall eat or wherewith we shall be clothed; we are discussing what we shall think. It is by his reason that man is what he is; clothes are made by him, not he by them. But what is man, and why? In the absence of answers to such elementary questions, or in the presence of a multitude of different and conflicting answers, there can be no rest or peace, and all attempts at reform are the merest patches on the torn garment, the merest palliatives to the cancer. Hence the failure of all modern efforts to eradicate "the materialism of the age." You cannot eradicate without going to the root. And the root questions are 'what?' and 'why?' We busy ourselves discussing 'how' before we know 'what' or 'why.' We even go to the length of discussing 'when' and 'where.'

The Arts and Crafts movements, the various Guilds of Handicraft, the societies for the exhibition and sale of 'hand-made' goods, the Schools of Art, the magazines and books without number for the spreading of 'culture', all these things are bound to failure. All they succeed in doing is the whitewashing of the sepulchre—they make the world look better than it is; they supply men of business with novel styles for further exploitation and money profit; they supply the factories with designs and designers. Thank Heaven when, as sometimes happens, the thing is too blatant to deceive; as when "The British Institute of Industrial Art" boldly, and with the support of His Majesty's Government and the combined forces of the Board of Trade and the Board of Education, announces that the addition of artistic

quality to British manufactures would swell the volume of foreign trade! Thank Heaven that "The Design and Industries Association" has too many well-known "princes of commerce" on its list of subscribers, too many directors of Schools of Art and too few artists of revolutionary intelligence, to prevent anyone from seeing that its real reason for existence is the increase of trade¹!

What we cannot thank Heaven for is the mass of good intention which, befogged by the vaguest theories of the nature both of art and of craft, becalmed in the absence of any trade wind of the spirit, intellectually muddled and with will decayed—for what is not known cannot be willed—is enrolled under the general banner of the Arts and Crafts Movement. Here is fiddling while Rome burns!

There is no remedy while men do not agree among themselves. And they disagree not only as to the nature of Art, but even as to the nature of Man and the reason of his existence. In the absence of such agreement, no union or collaboration is of any use whatever. "Men are not really united

¹ Such propaganda has been dubbed "enlightened self-interest," and the title has been welcomed by men of business themselves. For self-interest is a right and proper motive in all men—nay, it is man's first obligation! Our quarrel is not with self-interest as such but with muddle-headedness and falsehood. It is muddle-headedness which fails to distinguish between Art and Prudence, between making and doing, between the conditions requisite to good work and those requisite to good business. It is falsehood which proclaims the goodness of what is obviously corrupt.

save by the spirit, light alone brings them together, intellectualia et rationalia congregans et indestructibilia faciens¹.”

In the absence of agreement in the only things upon which men can really be united, let us at least learn by the mistakes of the past and avoid all this sham unity, this parade of ‘progress’ and improvement, this clubbing together to promote things that are of no importance or even thoroughly bad. A magazine devoted to ‘art,’ to be sold at less than ten shillings a copy, cannot possibly be well printed upon good paper unless it be very small in size, and in that case its appeal will be similarly limited. Then let such a magazine not pretend to be well printed. But if it do not pretend to be well printed, the English people, which loves hypocrisy and hates thinking, will certainly not buy it unless it be either ‘naughty,’ like ‘The Sporting Times,’ or ‘good business,’ like ‘The Exchange and Mart.’ Then let it be content with a small circulation and insist on good printing. In that case it will have to be decided what good printing is. And, as that is not a matter within the competence of an editorial committee, it will have to be decided that recourse be had to a good printer, and let him do his best. But in that case it will have to be decided what is a good printer. Is there such a person? After all, what is good and what is printing? Is it possible that some things are good and not others? Has printing a nature that can be defined? Is a good printer so called because he is a good man, a decent fellow who pays trade-union wages and who isn’t known to beat his wife

¹ Maritain, ‘Philosophy of Art,’ p. 48

unduly, or because he does good printing? If a good printer be so called because he does good printing though he be not a good man, do we conclude that it does not matter whether a printer be a good man or not? And if we know him to be a bad man, is it really desirable to have dealings with him even though he print well? Is there any connection between the goodness of the man and the goodness of his work? If there be no connection, then what kind of thing can printing be which derives nothing from the quality of the human being who does it? If, after all, we conclude that there must be some connection between the good man and the good work, how shall we judge in the matter without being either priggish as to the man or merely cultured and connoisseurish as to the work? Is not this over-consciousness a damned nuisance? Is there not something about a good civilization which, in the long run, produces, without talking about it, both good men and good work? Then must we not have a good civilization before we can have, except sporadically, either good men or good work? Have we got a good civilization? Oh Heavens! there is that word 'good' still undefined, and now we want to know what civilization is, whether it merely happens or is produced by intelligence and will, and whether a good civilization is the product of good men, or good men and good work the product of a good civilization. And if, as seems possible, both things are true, which, in the nature of things, comes first?

Speaking as one having authority, for behind us there is

the AUTHOR, we can proceed to answer some of these questions.

None is good save one, that is God, and all good is of God and for God, and therefore godly. Truth is simply "the Nature of Things." The Truth is what God knows, the Good is what God wills, and Beauty proceeds from Goodness and Truth. Beauty is not something added to a thing as jam to bread. It is the thing itself, seen as delightful to the understanding. Look after Goodness and Truth therefore and Beauty will take care of herself. Or, as St Augustine said, "Dilige Deum et fac quod vis"—Love God and do what you like.

A good civilization is therefore that social collaboration and congregation in which men, loving God, proceed to do what they like, that is, to act according to their nature and not against it.

A bad civilization is therefore that social collaboration and congregation in which men, not knowing or not loving God, proceed to do what most of them hate, that is, to act against their nature. In the end, by acting against nature in general, and by means of 'birth-control' and poisoned food, they proceed to exterminate themselves altogether.

Such as this latter was the civilization of Rome in her decay, and such is the state of affairs in the modern world.

"The modern world, which has promised everything to the artist, will presently leave him no more than the bare means of livelihood. Founded on the two principles against nature, of the fertility of money and of the finality of the

useful, multiplying without any possible limit both needs and servitude, destroying the leisure of the soul . . . imposing upon man the panting of the machine and the accelerated movement of matter, the modern world stamps upon human activity a measure genuinely inhuman and a direction genuinely diabolical; for the final end of all this delirium is to keep man from remembering his God . . .¹.”

Such being the state of affairs, it is obviously absurd “to waste tears and incantations over a disease that needs the knife.” Let us, then, cut ourselves out. Let us go out of Babylon—“go out from her, my people.” Babylon, much as it needs us to give a saleable appearance to its goods, to swell its foreign trade to be sure!—much as it dotes upon us, provided only we flatter it sufficiently—Babylon can very well be left to go to hell its own way. It is waste of time adorning a house built on sand.

The Revival of Handicraft, then, is practical politics only “in the mountains.” Alone, or in ones and twos, flight must be taken. Then, again, in the wilderness, earning our bread by the sweat of our brow, the wilderness shall blossom as the rose.

But, “*Quicumque vult . . .*”

POSTSCRIPT

The Revival of Handicraft is dependent, not upon the will of men to revive it, but upon the will of men to live and work in a way that is reasonable both for the work itself and for the work as done by men. This will is dependent upon

¹ Maritain, *ibid.* p. 53

knowledge. The nature of man must first be known and the nature of work—*finis operantis* and *finis operis*. All we know at present is that the conditions of life and work in modern England are inimical to both. Man is degraded by servitude, his work is degraded by commercialism and industrialism. You cannot live well unless a good life be your first concern. You cannot do good work unless, as a workman, doing good work be your first concern. Neither a good life nor good work are the first concern of the slave or the man of 'business.' The slave's first concern is security; the first concern of the man of business is gain. Except, therefore, in the case of rare individuals, good life and good work are impossible in England to-day. And the individual rebel, however unspotted from the world he may keep himself, is bound to be tainted by idiosyncrasy and eccentricity; he is likely to be both a prig and a faddist. He will set up for himself a standard of his own making unless he first ally himself to Truth, and Truth is a 'who' and not a 'what'! Again: "*Quicumque vult. . .*"

THE PROBLEM OF PARISH CHURCH ARCHITECTURE

“**N**ISI Dominus aedificaverit domum . . .” The problem of church architecture is involved in the word architecture and in the profession of the architect. Otherwise there is no ‘problem’ at all.

What is the problem thus called into being by the word architecture, and the man, architect? Not everyone sees that there is any problem. For many it is merely a question—not a problem. They ask themselves, what style of architecture shall we choose? (“I prefer gothic”—“Do you? I prefer renaissance—it’s so comfortable, so dignified and really cheaper. It can be done in plaster—you can’t do gothic in plaster—looks wrong somehow—or there’s this new byzantine—they say that’s cheaper still and Westminster Cathedral . . .” “Oh! but I can never pray in Westminster Cathedral—those stations and that music—though it’s better now they’ve got the big organ and they have recitals and not only that interminable plainchant—all right for monks, but they’ll never fill the cathedral till they go back to Mozart.” “Well, I must say I’d rather have a gothic church—it’s so soaring and religious and, if it is more expensive, well, it draws people, you know. People like pretty things and its easier to be pretty in gothic—besides, if you can’t build the whole church at once, you can leave a gothic church unfinished—an unfinished gothic church is

rather touching—doesn't look half so bad as an unfinished classical church—it's only commonsense—and you're not bound to have small windows . . .") And having answered the question of 'style,' they have merely to go on to ask "And what architect shall we have?" ("I think Mr W—— ought to be asked to submit a design—he's built lots of churches." "Oh! but he's rather dull." "Well, he might be asked to submit a design, but what about Sir So-and-So S——? He's very talented." "Yes, I expect he's pretty expensive." "Oh! they all are—they have to make expensive designs—but you can always cut it down when you come to the actual building. But you must, it's most important, get an experienced man—it's cheaper in the long run. You can't tell what contractors will do without the architect to safeguard you—they'd rob you right and left—shoddy materials and all that—so you must get an experienced architect who's used to dealing with contractors." "Well, what about Mr W——, as I said before?" "Yes, he's all right, if he is dull; besides he's a good R.C. and practically official architect to the diocese. I'd rather employ him than some of these artistic high-church people. W——'s better at gothic than classic, though." "Yes, but he's done one or two rather good romanesque churches." "Yes, and Fr D—— told me—he had his church done in romanesque, you know—that romanesque is really awfully cheap if you get a good business-like architect.") In the end the architect will very likely be chosen simply because he's the friend of the wife of the chief 'pious

donor'—and that recommendation is as good as any other, after all.

Thus there are many questions for those who take architecture and architects for granted, but no problem.

What is this problem, then? The problem is: how to get good church building, and not merely at a price within our means, but at any price at all! For, strange as it may seem to those who take part in such dialogues as those I have sketched, architecture is not building and architects are not builders. Architecture as it is practised to-day—indeed, as it has always been practised; for the word did not exist, nor were there any such persons as architects, before the Renaissance and Reformation between them combined to destroy the craft of building and to erect in its place the profession of the architect—architecture is the imposition (hence the word 'imposing') upon building of the notions of beauty possessed by the architect and favoured by his clients. Architecture is not simply building done in the best and most convenient way. Architecture is no more building than stage scenery is. The 'White City' was architecture; it was not building. Westminster Abbey was building; it is being turned into architecture. Waterloo Bridge is architecture; the Forth Bridge is building. The shrine of St Edward the Confessor was building; the Queen Victoria Memorial is architecture! In architecture you aim first at beauty. Goodness and truth are secondary considerations. In building you look after goodness and truth, knowing that beauty can take care of herself. And she does take care of

herself—even the Forth Bridge, which is but the building of mechanics under the direction of mathematicians, is beautiful because, being seen, it gives delight to the intelligence—in spite of its being, like the pyramid of Cheops, the work of slaves; whereas Waterloo Bridge, though also the work of mechanics, was done under the direction of an architect and does not so much please the intelligence as give pleasure to snobs.

The problem, then, of church architecture is: how to abolish architecture and return to building; how to abolish the architect and return to the builder. But indeed the remedies are obvious enough. First, we must return to sound principles, and second, we must will to apply them. The second is not here my concern—it is rather the concern of the pulpit and the confessional—it is no business of mine to tell people their wills are at fault. I will endeavour to state some principles which concern us in this matter.

1. Look after goodness and truth, and beauty will take care of itself.

2. Truth in building consists in the building really being what it purports to be. Truth answers to the question 'what?' What, precisely, is a church? What, precisely, is an altar? What, precisely, is a wall, or a roof, or a seat, or a floor? Different ages and peoples answer these questions in different manners but the fundamental truth remains. A church is such and such a thing in the fifth century or the fifteenth. A seat has to support the same kind of human frame in the first century or the twentieth. Style is con-

formity of the outward to the inward. The soul is the form of the body. *Operatio sequitur esse*, and as one is one does. The tragedy of modern England is that having gained the whole world it has lost its soul and therefore must needs galvanize the body of mediaeval Europe or pre-Christian Rome.

3. Goodness in building consists in the building really doing what it professes to do. A flying buttress, for example, carries the thrust of a wall or vault over a space. St Paul's Cathedral professes to need no such props. Actually, it has two rows of them hidden behind a 'classical' screen. This is not so much bad sense as ill-will, and very costly too. But such flagrant examples, though common enough, do not chiefly concern me. I am more concerned for the quality, the technical quality, of the actual work done by masons, bricklayers and carpenters. I am concerned that a good mason shall be allowed to do good masonry and not employed if he doesn't—that a good carpenter shall do good carpentry and be unemployed if he doesn't. At present these considerations seldom arise. Masons and carpenters have little or no responsibility in the matter. They do but what they are told, and those who employ them are concerned chiefly for the profits, if they be the contractors, and for the correct carrying out of the design, if they be architects. Those who actually do the work and should know how to do it—who should know a good job from a bad one—have no voice in the matter, demand no voice in the matter, are incapable of raising their voices in the matter, have become mere hands with no higher pride than to be well paid. Or

if by the grace of God there remain a few of the older men who still remember and retain the traditions of the ancients—a few masons, a few carpenters—even they are now quite incapable of intelligent initiative; they must be told everything and they have no higher ambition than to be considered expert at gothic or classic and to be employed on an elaborate job, a building with plenty of carving or groining upon which to show their skill—a natural and even laudable ambition truly when the ‘plenty’ is the exuberance of their good workmanship, but the opposite of laudable when it is merely some architect’s paper work contracted for at so much the yard.

4. Beauty in building need not here be defined or considered. We may rest assured that there will be no lack of beauty where active intelligence is applied to the consideration of the real being of the work, its intrinsic nature; and where goodwill is applied by the actual workmen to the doing of the work. Such were the conditions operative in all times and places which have produced beautiful building.

In order to regain such conditions we have definitely to abandon all seeking after bygone styles and all dependence upon the building contractor, who, in reality, is nothing but a financier in disguise.

We have simply to follow the injunction: “Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and his justice and all these things shall be added unto you”; that is to say, we must put the first things first. For what was said of men and lilies may equally be said of men and buildings. Behold Our Lady of Chartres,

no architect nor no contractor considered her, yet Liverpool Cathedral in all its glory is not arrayed as she.

“The ‘Early English’ masons seem to have been endowed with a large measure of creative power akin to the divine, so that under their hands the very stones blossomed out, as it were, into foliage and flower after their kind. The craftsmen of the ‘Decorated’ style chiefly copied their carved ornament from natural foliage, delighting in the forms created by God in the world round about them. Now, in the ‘Perpendicular’ period we cannot fail to be struck with a further change. We find the masons and wood-carvers revelling in the architectural work of their own hands. Their screens, canopy work, stalls, pulpits, fonts and parts of the fabric were adorned with miniature buttresses and pinnacles, with mimic vaults and diminutive battlements.” (E. Tyrrell Green)

The process described in the paragraph quoted is world-wide and age-long. Everywhere men begin as children delighting in the labour of their hands—collaborating, nay, vying with God in creating—being as it were a means, created by him for the express purpose, of continuing and consummating his own creative love. Everywhere this phase passes and, amid the applause of a more sophisticated world, men lose or surrender their creative power, their power of collaboration with God, and become merely dexterous, merely flattering imitators of God’s creation. Everywhere the third stage follows and man ends by turning on himself and worshipping his own image. It is clear that we must now be born again and delivered from the body of this death.

RESPONSIBILITY, AND THE ANALOGY BETWEEN SLAVERY AND CAPITALISM

MANY attempts have been made to fasten upon Capitalism the blame for the evils of this age. In spite of the unrivalled eloquence of our leaders and the courage of their followers, no one has succeeded in making out an unanswerable case, founded upon unimpeachable authority, until now. It has remained for one unworthy to put his pen to the word, and therefore to the argument, which shall give Capitalism and its attendant monster, Industrialism, their death-blow. The word is RESPONSIBILITY.

Before I proceed to the unanswerable argument I must name the unimpeachable authority and, as words are useless unless defined and definition is the one thing words lack in these days, I must first of all give definitions. But, we shall find, merely to define the words is to imply the argument. The words being understood, the compatibilities and incompatibilities are obvious. It will only be necessary to add some notes. This I shall do, and the blow will have been struck.

The first and most important thing to do is to define Catholicism; for the Catholic Church is the unimpeachable authority. Here we have our backs against the wall. Unless it be admitted that the Catholic Church speaks with the authority of God himself, I cannot proceed. It is useless to proceed; for there is no other person or institution that makes even the claim to such authority, and no lesser authority can be called unimpeachable.

CATHOLICISM

Catholicism is that system of belief and practice (faith and morals) taught by Jesus Christ, he being God, and by St Peter and his successors as vicars of Jesus Christ.

In this system it is believed and taught that man has free will and therefore that men are responsible persons owing a reasonable service and love to God and meriting either praise or blame from God according as they serve and love him well or ill by their deeds and works. It is believed and taught that man is responsible (i.e. capable of meriting praise or blame from God) for his acts and for the willed effects of his acts (i.e. the effects which he intends).

NOTES. 1. Responsibility is one of the distinguishing notes of Catholicism.

2. Where there is no self-control, or where there is diminished self-control, there is no responsibility, or there is diminished responsibility.

3. Where there is no responsibility, or where there is diminished responsibility, there is no Catholicism, or there is diminished Catholicism or Catholicism not fully developed or not fully effective.

4. The development of Catholicism is hindered where the responsibility of individuals is diminished.

SLAVERY

Slavery is that system of keeping and binding men in which the men are wholly subject to the will of their masters (keepers). "Liber est causa sui, servus autem ordinatur ad

alium.” The free man is a cause unto himself, but for the slave another is responsible (St Thomas Aquinas, ‘Summ. Theol.’).

“The highest manifestation of life consists in this: that a being governs its own actions. A thing which is always subject to the direction of another is somewhat of a dead thing. Now a slave does not govern his own actions, but rather they are governed for him. Hence a man, in so far as he is a slave, is a veritable image of death.” (Ibid.)

NOTES. 1. The institution of slavery involves loss of responsibility or diminished responsibility in the slave.

2. There is not necessarily any sin in any individual instance of slavery or slave-owning.

3. Though the Church has never actually condemned slavery, nevertheless, the note of Catholicism being the responsibility of the individual, the effect of the influence of the Church was the diminution and eventually the abandonment of slavery, for the two could not permanently co-exist.

4. “A small number of very rich men has been able to lay upon the teeming masses of the labouring poor a yoke little better than that of slavery itself” (Pope Leo XIII, Encyclical, ‘Rerum Novarum’). From this quotation we may gather that the Church has not changed her opinion with regard to slavery, and still thinks it a system to be discouraged.

CAPITALISM

Capitalism is that system in which goods are made and services rendered at the initiative of and for the profit of the lenders of 'money.'

NOTES. 1. Though the owner of Capital is, to the extent of his ownership, however little, a capitalist, nevertheless the name Capitalist is usually given only to one who depends for the whole or a considerable part of his livelihood upon the profit accruing to him from the loan of his Capital.

2. The word Capital, though ultimately meaning any form of property profitably (i.e. lucratively) usable, usually means money (but not necessarily coined money) or property expressed in terms of money value.

3. The difference between a 'Capitalist' and a 'Money-lender' is in the fact that the former retains control of the use that is made of his capital whereas the latter merely lends money at usury and is not concerned as to how it is used.

4. Though any system of using capital may be called Capitalism, nevertheless the name is usually given only to that system wherein the Capitalist is the initiator and receiver of profits under the system. Thus when one hears the word 'Capitalism' one does not immediately envisage the peasant system of Brittany or the nomad system of the desert. One immediately envisages the system prevailing in modern England, in northern Italy, in northern France, in the mining districts of Belgium, in the United States of America and in Germany.

5. In the countries where Capitalism prevails a Proletariat, i.e. a class depending upon its labour power alone, is always found.

6. The system called Socialism is one in which a number of Capitalists is exchanged for one Capitalist, viz. the State.

7. The Capitalist as such is neither maker of goods nor user of them: he is simply owner, lender and controller of capital.

8. The Capitalist as such is rightly and properly (i.e. without sin) primarily concerned for the profit accruing to him from the loan and use of his capital.

9. The system of Capitalism is one in which responsibility for the quality of the goods made is taken away from those primarily concerned, viz. the producer and the consumer, and placed in the hands of those only secondarily concerned for the quality of the goods, viz. the Capitalists.

10. A system wherein a man, though responsible for his acts, is not responsible for the effects of his acts is a system wherein responsibility is not fully developed.

11. A system wherein a man is responsible for what he does but is not responsible for the technical quality of what his deeds effect, is a system wherein responsibility is not fully developed.

12. A system wherein a man is responsible for the technical quality but not the intellectual quality of what his deeds effect is a system wherein responsibility is not fully developed.

13. A system wherein the majority of people (i.e. producers) has no responsibility or diminished responsibility for the intellectual quality of what its deeds effect (i.e. a system in which a small minority of the people, i.e. Capitalists, has the sole responsibility for the intellectual quality of what the deeds of the majority effect) is a system wherein responsibility is not fully developed or is degraded.

14. It is obvious that there is not necessarily any sin in any individual instance of Capitalism.

15. Though the Church has not condemned and, presumably, cannot condemn Capitalism, nevertheless, the note of Catholicism being the responsibility of the individual, the effect of the influence of the Church will be the diminution and eventually the abandonment of Capitalism; for the two cannot permanently co-exist.

INDUSTRIALISM

Industrialism is that system in which goods are made or services rendered in the mass. The latest development of this system is now definitely called 'mass production.' It has for its chief means of effectiveness: the subdivision of labour, the factory, machine production and 'scientific management,' though not all these means are always present or are always equally developed.

NOTES. 1. In the countries where Capitalism prevails the system of Industrialism is always found.

2. From the point of view of the Capitalist, as such, the chief merits of Industrialism are its profitableness (for small profits on each one of many articles made or services ren-

dered in the mass amount to more than even a large profit on one article made or service rendered individually) and, what comes to the same thing, its economy (for the cost of production is greatly reduced when many things are produced mechanically, in standardized form, in one place under one management).

3. From the point of view of the user (consumer), as such, the chief merits of Industrialism are the supposed cheapness and convenience of the goods made or of the services rendered.

4. From the point of view of the worker (producer), as such, the chief merits of Industrialism are regularity and simplicity of employment and remuneration (for the burdens of responsibility both for getting work and for the doing of the work are reduced and men degraded by Industrialism do not even desire responsibility).

5. It is obvious that there is not necessarily any sin in any individual instance of Industrialism.

6. Though the Church has not condemned and, presumably, cannot condemn Industrialism, nevertheless, the note of Catholicism being the responsibility of the individual, the effect of the influence of the Church will be the diminution and eventually the abandonment of Industrialism; for the two cannot permanently co-exist.

GENERAL NOTES

“There is no act of perfection which is a matter of counsel but what in certain cases is a matter of precept, as being necessary for salvation” (St Thos. Aq., ‘Summ. Theol.’).

1. It is to be observed that in these descriptions and notes the usual sense of words has been stressed. I am not concerned for the opposition of writers on Economics—their writings have merely served to confuse the issue. My object is to clear the issue for ordinary men and especially for those of the household of the Faith.

2. As neither Capitalism nor Industrialism are in se sinful systems, no person sins who for lawful purposes makes use of the products or services of those systems. Hence there is nothing sinful in the use of machine-made goods even by those, if there be any such, who believe that better goods can be made by hand. Nor is there any sin in using slave-made goods even by those, if there be any such, who believe that better men can be made outside slavery. Nor is there any sin in investing money in Capitalist or Industrialist enterprises even by those who realize that individual ownership and control are more helpful to the full development of Catholicism. Nevertheless, there are cases in which a matter of counsel becomes a matter of precept, and deliberately to foster a system which hinders the full development of Catholicism may sometimes be sinful and therefore inimical to salvation.

NOTE ON DOUBLE-ENTRY BOOK-KEEPING

This system of book-keeping (said to have been invented or 'brought out' by a Franciscan friar of Venice in the fifteenth century) is one in which every item of account is regarded in a two-fold manner, i.e. as being both a debt

and a credit. No 'entry' can be made under this system unless it be debited to one account and credited to another. The system of Capitalism is absolutely dependent upon 'double-entry.' It is even probable that, without that system, Capitalism could hardly have developed (just as mathematics could hardly have developed without the Arabic or some similar system of numerical notation). The reason for this is obvious. The very notion of 'profit and loss' is absent in a single-entry system for, in 'single-entry,' receipts and expenditure alone are adequately recorded and there is no facility in the recording of debit and credit. In 'double-entry' the notion of loan is fully developed. Every item of account is something owed by some one person or thing to another person or thing and for which that other is a creditor. It is immensely significant that this system of accountancy should have been developed just at the very moment when the civilization of Christendom was succumbing to the rising Commercialism. People are in the habit of denying that the Capitalist, as such, is a lender of money. What marvellous mugs we are! Why, the capitalist system of account-keeping reeks of the notion of loan. Nothing is spent—everything is a loan and the distinction between a 'loan account' and any other is a merely technical distinction. Abolish 'double-entry' and you would paralyse the whole of modern trade—you would bring Capitalism to the dust. Yet 'double-entry' is not sinful—it is an admirable system of account. It is no more sinful than the steam engine—that admirable toy!

The system of Capitalism stands at the bar of the judgement of all honourable and intelligent men; there must be no misunderstandings. We are not even hinting, much less declaring, that a certain system of accountancy is even slightly wicked in itself. We are simply concerned to point out, what is seldom or never noticed, that this system came into existence at the same time as 'Modern Capitalism' and that it is a system admirably adapted to promote not merely the development of Capitalism in the world but, and this is important, to intensify the capitalistic way of thinking—to develop in us a capitalistic mind. This it has certainly done. Everywhere what were formerly simply trades, crafts, professions or occupations are now candidly viewed as 'business'—that is enterprises in which one invests money and from which one expects a return, i.e. a return expressible in terms of 'interest' on capital¹. A quite simple country farmer about to purchase the right to graze cattle on a 'common' will hesitate to put his money down, however much he needs the 'rights,' unless he can put the thing to himself as a good investment—one yielding its ten per cent return on his outlay. This is a way of looking at things quite right and natural to the mere 'man of business'; it is, in the nature of things, quite foreign to the farmer or craftsman or professional man as such. Men of 'business' are a necessary part of any nation which engages in trading—God keep

¹ See London County Council advertisement: "Invest your Energies. L.C.C. classes offer a good return on your investment."

them. That men of 'business' should be our rulers is bad enough; that their way of thinking should permeate and possess the minds of whole nations of men is a tragedy compared with which war, pestilence and famine fade into insignificance.

APPENDIX

Extract from private letter: . . . Abbey, Feb. 4, 1925.

"In the last part of the fourth and the first part of the fifth centuries the conditions of society were awful from the economical point of view—the fabulous wealth of some patricians, with tens of thousands of slaves scattered in boundless domains, scarcely cultivated, scarcely known by their owners. Everything was money. Still, were the owners, Christian or not, in a state of sin? Who would say that of St Paulinus of Nola, or St Melania the younger, her husband Linianus and of all that society, the names of which we know so well through the letters of St Jerome, Paula, Eustochium, Blesilla, etc.? They gave up everything to follow Christ and so they worked to destroy the system, to become saints. But before doing so, just when they were practically and in fact owning those huge fortunes, who would dare to say that they were guilty of any moral sin? The Church was in a way benefitting by their immense wealth and so on—still working to destroy the system, patiently, wisely, quietly, and canonizing the ones who gave the hardest knock to it, the ones who became voluntarily poor for Christ's love and sake.

“Then it is the whole system which must be destroyed or disappear—call it as you like. It is for everybody to do his best to make the conditions of society better, more Christian, more human, by trying to destroy Capitalism and Industrialism and by putting something else in their place.”

...Prior, O.S.B.,

Monk of Solesmes

ID QUOD VISUM PLACET

NOTWITHSTANDING our obsession to-day with the problems of international peace and industrial unrest, the problem of the Beautiful is of deeper importance. But the difficulty in any definition of the Beautiful is always its practical applicability. People say: "Yes, such and such a definition is a true one, but take me to the National Gallery or to a railway goods-yard and let me hear how you apply it."

I proceed thus to the elucidation of the practical problem whether the definition 'A beautiful thing is that which pleases being seen' can be used as a practical test in judging of the Beautiful in human works:

OBJECTION I. It seems that the definition has no practical utility: Because, unless beauty be a merely subjective quality, a thing the sight of which pleases one person and displeases another cannot be called beautiful: but beauty is an objective quality; for it is written: "I have loved the beauty of thy house." Therefore the definition has no practical utility.

OBJECTION II. Because what pleases a person at one time may later on displease him.

OBJECTION III. Because, beauty being the object of the emotions and not of the intellect, it is not seeing that matters but feeling.

OBJECTION IV. Because it implies that appreciation of the beautiful is simply a matter of taste.

OBJECTION V. Because many things please being seen which both reason and experience show to be not beautiful.

OBJECTION VI. Because many people are unable to gain any pleasure from a beautiful picture of e.g. an ugly woman, being entirely occupied by the disgust caused by the ugliness of the woman—i.e. the pleasure or displeasure derived from the subject of the picture prevents such persons from perceiving and therefore from getting either pleasure or displeasure from the sight of the picture.

OBJECTION VII. Because to see an object properly one must understand it and to understand implies expert or even technical knowledge.

OBJECTION VIII. Because uneducated persons are incapable of deriving pleasure from the sight of beautiful works.

OBJECTION IX. Because what pleases the vulgar is obviously not beautiful.

OBJECTION X. Because pleasure cannot be a test of beauty inasmuch as that which is ugly often gives pleasure.

OBJECTION XI. Because the beautiful being seen is not meant to please but to uplift.

OBJECTION XII. Because the sight of some sins is pleasant and sin is not beautiful.

OBJECTION XIII. Because that which is beautiful often fails to give pleasure to sight, e.g. a slug.

OBJECTION XIV. Because many inelegant things give pleasure

to some, e.g. hippopotami, and to say that a hippopotamus is beautiful is absurd.

OBJECTION XV. Because seeing is not necessary to the perception of the beautiful inasmuch as one may speak of a beautiful voice or a beautiful smell or taste.

OBJECTION XVI. Because the beautiful, a thing spiritual in essence, cannot be perceived by material senses such as are named in the definition.

OBJECTION XVII. Because there is no authority capable of deciding what constitutes true vision or what should or should not give pleasure when seen.

ON the contrary, St Thomas says: "Pulchra enim dicuntur quæ visa placent" ('Summ. Theol.' I, Q. v, art. 4 ad 1).

I

¶ 1. **I** REPLY by saying that in this matter it is necessary first of all to distinguish between the beautiful and the lovely; for when an object is called lovely it is not really the object seen but rather some lovable quality which the object possesses, or of which the sight of it reminds us, that is so called. Therefore the lovely is not the beautiful in the sense of the definition¹.

¶ 2. Secondly, it is necessary to distinguish between making and doing; for a deed is a means to an end, whereas a thing made is an end in itself, and it is a thing made rather than

¹ In this essay I am assuming that the truth of the definition is not questioned, the only question is its practical utility.

a deed done which is the cause of 'pleasure being seen' in the sense of the definition.

¶ 3. Thirdly, it is necessary to distinguish between the true and the good; for an object called beautiful is true inasmuch as it is (has being, i.e. is known to God; for truth is what God knows) and is good inasmuch as it is (has being, i.e. is willed by God; for good is what God wills).

Because it is true it is seen by the mind (through the senses or, as regards spiritual beings, by spiritual means), and because it is good it is desirable and gives or can give pleasure to the mind—it pleases.

Therefore, and in accordance with the definition, Beauty, presupposing and depending upon Truth and Goodness, proceeds from Truth and Goodness. It is not a thing independent and added to truth and goodness. It is the shining out of the true and good in things.

But as all that is is True (because its being is known to God and God cannot know what is not true) and as all that is is Good (because its being is willed by God and God cannot will what is not good) and as Beauty proceeds from Truth and Goodness, so all that is is Beautiful.

How then can we speak of, how indeed can we know the untrue, the bad and the ugly? Can such things be? Can they have being? The answer is that they cannot. The untrue has no being, the bad has no being, the ugly has no being. Have the words then no meaning? This is the crux of the whole business. The difficulty is one of words and their relation to things specified; for though all that is is

beautiful, a thing called beautiful is so called by way of distinction.

Thus the word 'family' specifies a group consisting of father, mother and children. Yet we speak of a family consisting of a widow and children or even of orphans only. But if a family lacks father or mother or children it is not a family. The thing, family, does not exist. It has no being. We say such a family is not a true family.

We speak of an 'egg.' The word signifies a certain composition in a certain state. If the egg decompose, it is no longer an egg, strictly speaking. The egg as such does not exist. It has no being. We call it a bad egg. Again, the word 'angel' signifies a spiritual messenger of God. If such a being ceases to be God's messenger it becomes a demon. We call it a bad angel.

We speak of a 'face.' The word signifies forehead, eyes, nose, etc. A face without a nose is not a face. The face as such does not exist. It has no being. We call it an ugly face.

We speak therefore of a thing as untrue when it is not knowable by its name. We speak of a thing as bad when it does not do what its name implies. We speak of a thing as ugly when, neither knowable by its name nor doing what its name implies, it is the occasion of privation (displeasure) to the mind.

So of a beautiful thing we may say that it has Truth (for it conforms to its archetype in the mind of God), that it has Goodness (for it "doeth the will of my Father") and that its Beauty is the shining out of the True and the Good so that,

being seen, the thing delights the mind. And of an ugly thing we must say simply that it is a thing deprived of what it ought to have and that as Nature abhors a vacuum so the mind abhors nothingness.

A nose covered with warts is an ugly nose. But the nose is not seen. The warts are beautiful. The simple person who wants to know what a thing is before he will say whether it is beautiful, is quite right. A person who seeing a thing that hurts calls it ugly may be quite wrong. A certain asceticism, a certain willingness to bear pain, a certain willingness to undergo training is as necessary in aesthetics as in athletics, and as ignorance is often due to malice so ugliness is generally due to both malice and ignorance.

¶ 4. But beauty consists in due proportion (St Thomas, loc. cit.) and the word 'proportion' signifies the relations of part to whole and of a whole to other wholes—as when one says of the human body that it is 'so many heads high' or when one measures the size relations of a tower to the building of which it is a part or of a walking-stick to the hand—but beauty consists in DUE proportion and the word 'DUE' signifies a debt, so that to say that a certain thing has DUE proportion signifies that it has the proportion DUE to it—the proportion which it ought to have on account of its being what it is, and underlying the material (time and space) measure of things there is the spiritual (true and good) measure of justice. From the discovery that the average beautiful male body is 'seven heads high' we may not conclude that the beauty of the human body depends

upon its having that proportion, for in any particular case that proportion may not be the proportion which it ought to have. And this is also the case in what we call works of art. Thus in poetry as in ordinary speech, in music and dancing, in painting and in all the arts of men—from the making of pea-sticks to the building of St Peter's; from the making of a fog-horn to the making of a city—DUE proportion consists in justice.

II

¶ 5. **I**N the sense of the definition the sight of an object by the eye is meant, but it is not eyesight alone that is meant; for both sight and hearing certainly, and possibly other senses, are means to the perception of the beautiful; but sight and hearing are chiefly meant as being the more disinterested senses.

¶ 6. Further, the word 'seen' in the definition is not to be taken as meaning simply intellectual cognition, as who should say "I see the force of your argument."

¶ 7. Further, the sight of an object may call to mind the memory of another object to which it bears resemblance, or with which we associate it. Such association and representation, though not interdicted, are not what is meant when in the definition it says "that which pleases being seen."

¶ 8. But, in the sense of the definition, it is the perception of the object itself that is meant—the object itself and not something of which the object reminds us or of which it is a representation.

¶ 9. **T**HE sight of a thing sometimes may to some people cause a pleasant physical feeling. This pleasant feeling is not interdicted, but it is not to be taken to be what is primarily meant in the definition.

¶ 10. Further, the sight of a thing sometimes may to some people cause a pleasant emotion (e.g. a regiment marching to war, or the photograph of a dear friend or aunt). Such emotion is not interdicted, but it is not to be taken to be what is primarily meant in the definition.

¶ 11. Further, the sight of an object may cause pleasure on account of the dexterity of the maker displayed in it, or on account of the efficiency with which it is seen to perform its function; thus the dexterous wood-carving of a certain Grinling Gibbons is productive of much pleasure to some people, and the organs of the body or the works of a watch may please on account of their excellent adaptation to their purpose. This kind of pleasure is not interdicted, but it is not to be taken to be what is primarily meant in the definition. For beauty pertains to things made rather than to deeds done (¶ 2). Dexterity is a property of the doer rather than of the maker, and efficiency is a property of the object at work (it pertains to the deed of the object) rather than a property of the object as a thing to be contemplated. For though the shape of an organ or mechanism is conditioned by the function it has to perform (the deed it has to do), nevertheless the act of contemplation concerns the object as a thing in being rather than as a thing in action—it is con-

cerned with the thing as it is rather than with the thing as displaying what it does.

¶ 12. Further, the sight of a thing may set going a process of reflection or of ratiocination and the term of this process may be a kind of delight of the intelligence, as when the parts of a machine or organism are shown and their functions understood. This delight is not interdicted, but it is not to be taken to be what is primarily meant in the definition.

¶ 13. But the pleasure meant in the definition is the delight of the intelligence spontaneously resulting from the sight of the object itself, for beauty consists in due proportion, as said above, and it is in objects so proportioned that the intellect naturally delights.

REPLY TO OBJECTION 1:

(a) If the object is in fact beautiful, the one who is not pleased has not seen it; his displeasure is due to some accidental cause (e.g. prejudice; as when a Plymouth Brother looks at an idol).

(b) If the object is in fact ugly¹, the one pleased is pleased by some accidental quality in it (e.g. when a man is pleased by the mere elaborateness of a suite of carved furniture).

¹ Ugly. As evil is privation of good, so ugliness is privation of beauty (beautiffulness) and is due to a lack of truth (i.e. conformity to the archetype) or to a lack of good (i.e. conformity to the will of God, ¶ 3) or to both.

REPLY TO OBJECTION II:

This has been answered above; for the same person at different times may be considered as two different persons at the same time.

REPLY TO OBJECTION III:

To say that beauty is the object of the emotions is to say either that the emotions are part of the original furniture of the mind (i.e. the intellect and the will) or that beauty does not relate to the intellect or the will (i.e. the mind). But the emotions are not part of the original furniture of the mind, being simply intense excitations of the appetitive faculty¹, and are more properly called passions; and beauty, as St Thomas says, "relates to the cognoscitive faculty." Hence things of beauty are the cause or occasion rather than the object of the emotions.

REPLY TO OBJECTION IV:

This may be granted, but there is such a thing as good taste justly so called. "Tastes differ, but not right tastes; and moral notions, but not right moral notions²."

REPLY TO OBJECTION V:

Answered above, ad 1. But see also reply to Objection x, below, and ¶ 9 et seq.

REPLY TO OBJECTION VI:

This objection implies that it is the object of painting to produce an illusion. It implies that a picture necessarily depends upon its resemblance to something not itself (e.g. the

¹ Cf. Maher, 'Psychology,' p. 395

² Rickaby, 'Moral Philosophy,' p. 151

ugly woman). This is not always so. Paintings are of two kinds—those dependent upon illusion and those dependent upon their own painted nature. In the sense of the definition the thing seen is the thing itself and not some other thing of which the painter may produce an illusion. Paintings which cause disgust only on account of the unpleasant illusions they produce are not necessarily ugly paintings. It is the illusions which are ugly in such a case. It is not to be denied that many paintings which produce pleasant illusions are also good paintings; or that many paintings which produce unpleasant illusions are nevertheless good paintings. Nor is it to be denied that many paintings which produce pleasant illusions are nevertheless bad paintings, just as many paintings which produce unpleasant illusions are bad paintings. NOTE:—It must not be supposed that because painting is not necessarily dependent upon the production of illusion that therefore in the case of paintings not so dependent the subject is of no importance. On the contrary, in such paintings (sculptures, tapestries, music, etc.) it is to be said that the painting is the subject—the subject made in paint rather than represented in paint. Thus the picture known as ‘Our Lady of Perpetual Succour’ is not properly said to represent the flesh and blood appearance of a certain holy woman, but must rather be said actually to be our Lady in paint.

The nineteenth-century habit of thinking of beauty as dependent upon representation is responsible for the statement sometimes heard that “miraculous pictures are always ugly.” Ugliness being for the nineteenth century that which

does not produce the illusion of natural appearance, such a picture as 'Our Lady of Perpetual Succour' is for the nineteenth century necessarily an ugly picture. But, as a vehicle for the miraculous, a picture which is merely a representation is inferior or impossible, and the truth is of course that 'Our Lady of Perpetual Succour' is not ugly, but is only deemed so by those who, looking at it, do not see the picture itself so much as a certain stiffness of attitude, expression, etc., which they imagine would be unpleasant in their friends or relations. (See ad I and ad II.)

REPLY TO OBJECTION VII:

To see an object, in the sense of the word SEE as used in the definition, does not necessitate any expert knowledge, because beauty consists in due proportion as said above (§ 4) and what is well proportioned is reasonable. Sense being a sort of reason (St Thomas, loc. cit.) can immediately recognize what is after its own kind—that is the reasonable—that is the duly proportioned—that is the beautiful. And those who do not immediately recognize the beautiful are not therefore inexpert; they are simply in some degree blind or blinded. They do not see the thing they are looking at. They are as one who should complain of a man for playing bad football when he is really playing cricket.

REPLY TO OBJECTION VIII:

Answered above, ad VII.

REPLY TO OBJECTION IX:

The 'vulgar' are often pleased by the same things as please

the 'refined,' but if they are pleased by ugly things the objection is answered as above, ad 1 (b).

REPLY TO OBJECTION X:

As said above (§ 9 et seq.) the word pleasure in the sense of the definition is not simply sensual pleasure, but rather the delight of the intelligence rejoicing in what is after its kind (hence the use of the word SEEN in the definition rather than FELT or SENSED—see § 13). The pleasure derived from ugly things is (a) either purely sensual and, as such, neither intelligent nor wilful, but rather, like the emotions, suffered by the soul, or (b) purely sentimental (as when the subject of an ugly picture has pleasant associations or when the dexterity of the painter is displayed).

REPLY TO OBJECTION XI:

Answered above, ad x, but the maker of things, as such, is not concerned with the effect (uplifting or otherwise) of his work upon the beholder. As maker he is simply concerned with the *recta ratio factibilium*.

REPLY TO OBJECTION XII:

The words 'the sight of sin' cannot strictly be used, for sin is not a thing seen. Sin resides in the will—it is the privation of good will (§ 3). But an act may be seen and the sight of an act known to be sinful is only sensually pleasing, or is only pleasant as abstracted from the conditions which render an act sinful. Thus the sight of an immodest act is either only sensually pleasing, or is pleasant as abstracted from immodesty—as when a person may rightly be pleased

by the sight of the healthy human body even though the nakedness may be an act of immodesty on the part of the naked person—and as a person may be pleased by the sight of a drunken man, not because drunkenness is good, but because the mind is such that it can contract out, so to say, and perceive and take pleasure in the whimsical antics of a ‘drunk’ (as things made) while at the same time deploring the foolishness and ill-will of the glutton.

REPLY TO OBJECTION XIII:

The displeasure derived from the sight of such things as slugs is not derived from the slug as a thing to be seen, but rather from the sight of the slug remembered as an unpleasant slimy soft thing, or as a destructive inhabitant of the garden. Just as a ‘drunk’ or an indecent person may be seen as pleasant to sight (i.e. as sights abstracted from the notions of gluttony or immodesty), so a slug may be seen as a thing beautiful in itself and a sight productive of pleasure in consequence (see ad XII).

REPLY TO OBJECTION XIV:

The pleasure derived from the sight of such things as hippopotami is either similar in kind to that discussed in the reply to Objection XII (that is as abstracted from those things with which we associate the thing), or it is derived from the spontaneous perception by the intellect of the due proportion of the creature. But beauty consists in due proportion (¶ 4); therefore to say that a hippopotamus is beautiful is not absurd.

REPLY TO OBJECTION XV:

Answered above in ¶ 5 et seq.

REPLY TO OBJECTION XVI:

For human beings all knowledge comes through the senses. The knowledge of the beautiful is not excepted and God himself is known to men by means of sense. "The mind has to abstract its own object from sense 'data'—and then reason 'argues' a posteriori to the existence of a first cause who is God."

REPLY TO OBJECTION XVII:

With regard to the first part of the Objection: the 'laws of thought' (i.e. A cannot be A and not A at the same time, etc.) constitute an authority for man in the discovery of true vision (e.g. whether we are really seeing a thing and whether it is what we see), and with regard to the second part: the nature of the human mind is such that it cannot in fact take pleasure in what lacks being. Therefore the authority denied by the Objection is to be found in the human mind itself used strictly according to its own nature, and where there is failure in perceiving the beautiful it is not a failure in the authority, but a failure to make use of the authority. For it is within the competence of the human intellect to know truth (if not now the whole truth), to perceive what is true and what is good and it is the nature of the human will to desire the good. The beautiful therefore proceeding from the true and the good (¶ 3) is the *dupē pabulum* of man's mind and his mind is his authority in judging of beautiful works.

EPILOGUE

IN spite of what I have written it remains that people will differ in their judgements of human works. This is inevitable and not altogether deplorable. It is inevitable because it is not possible for human beings entirely to rid themselves of prejudice and predilection; nor is it possible for them to maintain unwavering the mood of intellectual quietude in which alone just judgement can be achieved. And in man's state of imperfection, due as much to his finite condition as to his fallen nature, difference of opinion is to be borne patiently rather than deplored. The most that can be hoped is that we shall place our judgement on the ground-work of good sense and good will; that we refrain from unreasonable condemnations; that however much we trust our instincts and our traditions we do not fail to bring them to the test of reason, remembering that as a good life is a mortified life so good taste is mortified taste.

ARCHITECTURE AND SCULPTURE

I

THE relation of Sculpture to Architecture depends, like all other relationship, upon the nature of the things related.

Let us begin by making sure of our terms. We may then proceed to discover relationships.

Both 'sculpture' and 'architecture' are vague terms, and yet we use them freely as though their content were well understood. It is easier to say what they are not than what they are. Nevertheless, they may be made to connote quite definite ideas and I shall make the following preliminary definitions:—

SCULPTURE is any kind of carving or modelling whether in relief or in the round, and

ARCHITECTURE is any kind of ordered structure—a structure, that is to say a thing having parts and of which the parts are put together according to order or rule.

But these definitions are too wide. The words are not commonly used in such inclusive senses. For instance, if any kind of three-dimensional modelling is sculpture, then ornamental house tiles are sculpture. And so they are. Yet we do not commonly use the word to include such things.

Again, if any kind of ordered structure is architecture, then a Singer sewing-machine is architecture. And so it is. Yet we do not commonly use the word to include machines.

There is evidently a special meaning attached to the words and it is, I think, equally evident that it is the special sense in which we are here interested. Nevertheless, special senses presuppose and depend upon common senses, and in discovering the special senses which the words have for us we shall do well to begin with and to bear in mind their common senses.

The special sense of the word sculpture in which we are interested may be defined thus:—

Sculpture is that kind of carving or modelling, whether in relief or in the round, of which the maker is a responsible workman and whose work has value in itself apart from anything it may do—any function it may perform. It is its being rather than its doing that counts. What it does is its excuse, not its boast.

To be sculpture, in this restricted and special sense, an ornamental house-tile must be worth having for its own sake. It is not sufficient that in conjunction with other similar tiles it makes an ornamental roof. It must be a thing we can regard independently of anything else, however much it may owe its existence and even its excellence to the fact that it was made to be one of many. There are ornamental house-tiles which can be so regarded, but they are not made nowadays in the pottery districts.

In the same way, the yards or miles of mouldings made for cornices, arches, etc., though in the common sense they may be works of sculpture, in the special sense in which we are interested they are not sculpture because they have no

intrinsic goodness—they depend not upon their being but upon their doing, not upon what they are but upon what they effect. If they are effective their end is reached. The miles of what are called ‘dentils’ to be seen on sham classical buildings is a case in point. They have usually very little intrinsic value; their value is almost entirely extrinsic. It is done for effect. Occasionally, you may find a building in which even the mouldings merit the name of sculpture in the special sense, but generally, mouldings are not sculpture, except in the common sense.

The special sense of the word architecture may be similarly defined. It is that kind of structure which has intrinsic value—and this is true whether its author so intends or not. Very many buildings, both ancient and modern, were not erected with any idea of creating anything of intrinsic value. Many mediaeval buildings, as well as many modern bridges, viaducts, factories and what not, have been erected without any consciously-known intention upon the part of their makers that anything was being done other than something merely useful, merely serving, merely performing a function. From the point of view of our understanding there is no harm in this. Self-consciousness is by no means an essential for the production of things of intrinsic value. Thus, the aqueducts that cross the Roman campagna are most certainly architecture; so also is the Forth Bridge and the dam of Assuan, no less than St Paul’s Cathedral or the new cathedral at Liverpool. Because a railway viaduct is better building than a sham gothic cathedral it does not follow that it is not

architecture. Neither the intention of its maker nor the effect upon the beholder is the ultimate test. The ultimate test is the intrinsic quality demonstrably visible in the work.

Walt Whitman is quoted as saying that "Architecture is what you do to a building when you look at it," and this saying, like many half-truths, is very valuable. But a half-truth is not a saying that is only half true; it is a saying that is only half the truth; and Whitman's saying defines architecture merely in its subjective effects. Nevertheless, the saying is valuable because it expresses clearly the fact that architecture is of some value to the beholder as a thing important in itself and to him and is not to be judged merely as a building serving some useful object. The saying fails as a complete statement of the truth because it implies that the effect upon the beholder is all that architecture is—that architecture has no being apart from the beholder. Such a point of view leads to very ill results—to all sorts of merely scenic effects—to theatricalism and emotionalism and in the end to a complete divorce between the controller of the building works, the architect, and all the various trades with which he has to deal. In such a view masons, carpenters, metal workers, engineers, glaziers all become merely so many puppets, whose work in itself is of no importance and of no intrinsic value, whose only right to existence is their ability to contribute to the general subjective effect.

As Walt Whitman has expressed the thing for architects, so another artist has expressed it for sculpture. Mr Zadkine,

a Russian sculptor of considerable genius and of European reputation, has said to the same effect, a work of sculpture has no material existence of any importance. It is a means to the production of a desired effect upon its beholder. The stone or wood does not matter. He says a carving is only visible by means of light and shade, therefore light and shade are all that a sculpture is. He says that by means of light and shade a sculptor produces certain effects upon the beholder as a painter does by means of coloured pigments and that the effects produced are the only things that matter.

What Whitman and Zadkine have done for the arts of architecture and sculpture, Nietzsche, among modern philosophers, has done for philosophy. He says "there is no being behind doing . . . the being is a fictitious addition to the doing—the doing is all." I need not point out to you that in these modern sayings we have simply age-old ideas in new dress. The war between the objective and the subjective has been going on since the time of Heraclitus. The world of Mr Clissold is, in fact, several thousands of years old.

We may leave the metaphysical question to the metaphysicians; for us workmen it is clear that it is only when we believe in the intrinsic value of our work that it is worth doing and worth anything when done. The being in which we believe may be only an imputation—that is no question for us as workmen—just as the free will and consequent responsibility which we believe ourselves to possess as men may be only an imputation; yet it is only upon these

imputations that the works and deeds of men are in any way considerable.

Architecture then, in the special sense with which we are here concerned, is not merely building—not merely piling one stone upon another—not merely that kind of structure which interests no one apart from its utility. Nor is it that kind of building which merely produces an effect upon its beholder. Stage scenery is not architecture in the sense with which we are concerned; it is rather merely a representation of architecture (and that is all it generally sets out to be). Much modern street building is hardly more architecture than stage scenery is. It seems to be inspired by very much the same motives. It is merely representative and for the sake of the emotional effects it produces.

Architecture is building; but it is not merely utilitarian nor merely effective; it is building which, whether we use it or not, whether it moves us emotionally or not, is seen to be in itself good and delightful to the mind. And sculpture in our special sense (which is also the sense in which it is generally used) is not merely three-dimensional ornamentation or portraiture—machine-made moulding might be that, Messrs. Elliot and Fry's photographs in marble might be that—sculpture is any three-dimensional thing which, whether it perform any function or not, whether we find it emotionally moving to us personally or not, is seen to be in itself good and delightful to the mind.

Architecture and sculpture are in fact two arts. Like all arts they demand the exercise of skill. Like all arts they

demand the deliberate application of the skill of a responsible workman. And in our special sense they are 'fine arts,' that is to say they are arts the object of which is to produce things beautiful in themselves—beautiful, that is to say delightful to the mind.

But we must beware of these 'fine' arts consciously so called and so pursued. For both builder and carver it is better to forget about beauty. It is sufficient that we devote ourselves to the work as being worth doing—that we believe in the thing we are making, the reality of its being, and devote ourselves to its making as to a thing worth making for its own sake.

For both architect and sculptor it is better to forget about effects and to concentrate upon what it is they are making and how well it can be made.

II

HAVING thus got a more or less clear idea in our minds as to what architecture and sculpture are, we can proceed to discover what is the relation between them. How are they related to one another? Is there any necessary relation at all or are they only fortuitously joined? Is sculpture a necessary concomitant of architecture or is it merely an arbitrary addition—like the garlands with which they deck the locomotives of royal trains?

There are, it seems, two ways of approaching these questions. We may proceed by the historical method and discover what has, in fact, been the relation in the past, what

the relation is now and what it is likely to be in the future; or we may proceed a priori and, by probing the logical deductions to be made from the consideration of the natures of the two arts, we may arrive at conclusions as to what is the relation, if any, between them. The latter method is the more fascinating and requires the less learning—let me attack it first.

I will first re-state the definitions in the light of what I have said, for I may now define architecture and sculpture more simply and more fundamentally.

SCULPTURE is the shaping of anything for the sake of the shape—whether by means of masoning, carving, modelling or any other means. “For the sake of the shape”: but this does not mean that it does not matter what the thing is; for what a thing is is a condition of its shape. Thus a candlestick has a certain shape because it is a candlestick; and a crucifix But whereas the mere utilitarian asks: “What does it matter what shape a candlestick is so long as it will hold a candle?” the sculptor says: “Just because it has got to hold a candle the shape matters very much indeed—so much, that it is worth the greatest consideration for its own sake.”

To shape—to take anything and by any means to contrive to shape it so that the shape is worth having for its own sake—that is what we call sculpture. To take several things having each a separate use and purpose and to put them together to make one thing and yet so that the separate things retain their several uses and purposes, that is not sculpture, it is architecture.

ARCHITECTURE is the constructing of anything for the sake of the shape thus constructed—whether in stone, wood or metal.

It is essential to the notion of architecture that there should be construction—the ordering of parts according to rule and according to a ruler.

In that respect it differs from sculpture. The notion of construction is not essential to sculpture. It is only accidentally that a work of sculpture involves the business of construction.

Thus in both architecture and sculpture we have the same aim of making a shape which shall be a unity and a thing of which the shape is worth having for its own sake—but in architecture it is by means of the putting together of parts which still retain their several functions and identities, whereas in sculpture the notion of construction—the putting together of parts—is absent and if there be any putting together of parts, then such parts lose their identity and become merged in the whole.

Both architecture and sculpture having the same aim of making a shape intrinsically valuable and desirable and delightful to the mind—sculpture by direct application of hand and tools to a given material, architecture by the indirect method of construction—both are what we call ‘fine’ arts; both are in reality like the making of toys—and all artists are in fact toy makers.

The making of toys is man’s most appropriate occupation—it is what he is really for—it is what, when he is good, he

is really good at—and the whole world as a toy and everything in it things to play with—that is the only really serious and sanctified view of human life; it is the only one which places man in his proper relation to God—it is obviously the state of man in Heaven, and the Kingdom of Heaven on earth can have no other description.

As things are, we must take a more frivolous view—we are forced by circumstances to consider such things as the convenience of trade, the requirements of hygiene, the exigencies of human labour—even the size of men's bodies!

Moreover, it happens that, in the ordinary way, we cannot spend our days making or constructing the shapes our minds delight in for no other reason than that such things are delightful. For the most part we have to give something in return for the bread and butter we eat, the houses and clothes we use. Justice makes demands not to be neglected. Further it happens—and this is of course the result of the depravity of will which our fallen nature inherits—that, even where justice makes no claim of service, we are not fit to be trusted. Hardly one man in a million can really be trusted not to make a fool of himself unless he be tied up and tied down by some sort of utilitarian motive.

Ask a sculptor to supply you with a nice shaped stone, and if you do not tell him of some purpose the stone will serve he will be at a loss and will turn out some formless gimcrack or sentimental nudity suitable only for road metal.

Ask an architect to make you a nice shaped construction

and he will be equally lost. The 'White City' is not a thing of which we should regret the loss.

Actually and having regard to the nature of man—to his real nature and his real destiny as a child of God and inheritor of the Kingdom of Heaven—this is a tragedy. Like a bad child in a nursery, he cannot be trusted to play nicely.

That is how things are and we have to consider how to make the best of such a bad job. On the other hand, we should go entirely off the rails were we to forget man's proper nature and, seeing him only in his fallen state, were to define the business of life accordingly. Utilitarianism tempered by suicide instead of by art would then be the only reasonable course.

As things are we must take it for granted that in the vast majority of cases the work required of architects and sculptors is something useful.

In the case of an architect it is constructions for this or that special purpose. In the case of a sculptor it is the shaping of materials to a special end. Thus of the former I may demand a pigsty or a church—of the latter a pillar or a portrait.

A pillar. That is the key to the relationship between architect and sculptor—between architecture and sculpture. The architect constructs a unity, yet the parts of his construction do not suffer the loss of their identity. In fact, the parts are each one a work of sculpture, as every item of news—each separate article—in a newspaper is, in spite of 'Daily Mails,' a work of literature and the editor the

architect. Of course, the whole building is in a figurative sense a work of sculpture, inasmuch as it may be seen as a three-dimensional shape—but we are not at the moment concerned with figurative senses. Ordered construction—the ordering of parts to a whole—that is the essence of architecture properly so called. There are indeed some things which may be thought of as parts of a building which are not sculpture. Thus drains are not sculpture, nor are glass windows, nor are floors or pavements. What we call sculpture is essentially three dimensional. But then, strictly speaking, drains are not a part of a building, they are merely a convenient addition. And windows are not parts of a building, they are, however admirable, merely spaces—whether filled or empty. And floors and pavements are not really parts of a building, they are mere surfaces. An arched or reinforced concrete floor is another matter. Directly you think of it as a three-dimensional thing and as a definite part of a building it comes within the scope of the idea of a work of sculpture, that is: a thing of which the shape may have intrinsic value. Sculpture, then, is subordinate to architecture, for the sculptor merely supplies parts whereas the architect orders and rules the whole. A work of architecture must be thought of as a construction of which the parts are works of sculpture.

In the hierarchy of the arts it is obviously the architect who is the ruler—the boss. Yet we need not worry ourselves as to which is the more important or which has the finer job. When it comes to that there is no difference be-

tween them. Both are responsible workmen and both have the same chance of enjoying beatitude.

The difference between them is one of function, and in a normal civilization that man becomes an architect who has the gift for co-ordinating the labour of others and that one becomes a sculptor who has rather the gift for making things himself than for co-ordinating the work of other people.

A priori the relation of architecture and sculpture is a very close one indeed. The two arts are inseparable. There is no scope for the maker of pillars unless there be someone wanting a building. There is no way of making a building unless there be men capable of making pillars.

I use the word pillar because it seems to me best to convey the notion of this relationship. Just as cats is dogs and rabbits is dogs, whereas parrots are horses, a tortoise is an insect and a typewriter is a bicycle, so every essential part of a building may be thought of as a pillar, whereas drains are just airy nothings. Walls are a sort of broad pillar; vaults are pillars meeting overhead; arches are pillars bending and thrusting from wall to wall; and cornices are simply the tops of those broad pillars we call walls.

It is the greatest mistake to regard the sculptor merely as the purveyor of applied ornament or as the purveyor of the occupants of niches. Such work is simply a special department of the business of sculpture. If that be the only work of sculptors in these days so much the worse for these days, and we will leave that matter until we come to discuss the

question historically. Meanwhile, it is clear that the thing called 'ornament' and the thing called 'the figure' are by no means the essential business of the sculptor. A man may be a sculptor and be everywhere known as such and yet never carve a single piece of ornament or a single representation of the human figure. A priori it is simply a matter of seemliness whether there be any ornamental or figure sculpture on a building. The figure sculptor is simply one of many kinds of sculptors whose work is co-ordinated by the architect. You may or may not want representations of human beings on a building, just as you may or may not want staircases. If you want them you presumably want them for some reason. And if you have a reason for wanting them, there is presumably a reasonable place to put them. Or we may approach the matter in a more simple manner and, not thinking of ornament as a thing applied to something else, not thinking of figure sculpture as something for which there is or is not a place, we may regard every wall and every pillar as an occasion for those particular kinds of sculpture. From such a point of view the little building called the Erechtheum at Athens was evidently regarded, but it is my contention that the pillars of the Parthenon are no less works of sculpture because they are not caryatids. And the architrave is no less sculpture than the frieze, although Phidias was not employed to carve it.

Evidently, then, we may regard sculpture from two points of view. Either it is a thing brought in from outside and applied to a building or given a place, a niche, there; or,

more fundamentally, sculpture is the actual shaping of the necessary parts of a building. In the former case it is simply a matter of circumstances whether the thing be wanted—just as it is a matter of circumstances whether an inscription be wanted or not, or whether a window be wanted or not.

One of the big misunderstandings in this matter is the idea that ornamental carving and figure sculpture are a sort of arbitrary or even capricious additions to a building quite independent of any reason for their existence. The misunderstanding arises from the confusion between the job of building as it might be in a world in which aesthetic considerations were the sole criterion—a kingdom of heaven on earth, a thing we have not got and a thing we shall never have until we are all born again and have become as little children—and the job of building in a world in which considerations of prudence are the rule. It is the latter world in which we live and it is the former for which we yearn. As an artist it would be absurd and worse than absurd—it would be an act of treachery—for me to decry this yearning. Nevertheless, it behoves us to face the facts and all the facts go to show that under existing circumstances it is the strict rule of reason to which we must submit ourselves—it is the rule of reason which alone can save us from folly both as men and as artists. Nay, reason will not only save us from folly; she will even open the door to that paradise for which we yearn. It is as though one should say: “he that loseth his life shall save it”; for the most reasonable sculpture turns out to be the most beautiful, and the builders who

most strenuously discipline themselves according to reason make the buildings which most surely produce that delight of the mind we call beauty.

The relation of architecture to sculpture is thus seen to be more than a blood relationship—as of mother and children—independent entities each seeking its own beatitude. It is the relationship of parts to whole. Sculpture is the well making of the parts—architecture is the ordering of the whole. And those particular branches of sculpture which we call ornamental carving and figure sculpture are—like towers and turrets—things to be done without unless there be a reason for them.

III

BUT a priori reasoning, though valid, may lead us to conclusions which do not seem to be in accordance with experience. A priori reasoning must be complemented by historical reasoning—that is, reasoning a posteriori from the facts as we know them now and can learn of them in the past.

Historically, it seems, sculpture comes before architecture. Man made things before he made constructions, and this is easily understood. He played about in his cave—carving a bone with a flint—long before it occurred to him to put two and two together. The notion of making an individual thing well, the spreading of oneself, so to say, on a thing until it is satisfactory—until it is delightful to the mind—this notion must have existed for many centuries before men had achieved any power of co-ordination.

The notion of construction, of putting things together, is a notion which seems to bring us at once to historic times. Prehistoric times show us nothing in the way of constructions other than the simplest tying of things together—as of a flint to a handle. And as construction is of comparatively recent appearance in man's history so the idea of collaboration is more recent still. The notion of organizing the work of several men or of many men, the notion of co-ordinating the results of different kinds of labour is, comparatively, very recent indeed.

The importance from our point of view of grasping these facts thoroughly is this, that man was and knew himself to be a responsible workman, consciously and deliberately making things as well as he knew how, long before there was any man acting as architect, that is, ruler of the works of other men. In fact, the sculptor existed long before the architect and so long before that it may be said that the nature and character of man were fully developed before the architect came on the scene. Of course, I am aware of that school of thinkers according to whom man is not a definite and definable and immutable species. Mr H. G. Wells is at the moment the popular exponent of this way of thinking. It is not for me, and certainly this is not the occasion, to probe this matter. I shall, however, take it as quite certain that Walt Whitman, Zadkine, Nietzsche and H. G. Wells are wrong. I shall assume that there is being behind doing and that man is a certain being in the full sense of these words. As will be clear later, this is a very im-

portant assumption, for in this business of architecture and sculpture we are dealing with the works of men and we can argue nothing whatever as to the relationship between architects and sculptors if we deny any real being to men. I repeat then: the nature and character of man were determined before the advent of the thing called construction and before the advent of the person called architect.

The existence of things to be co-ordinated was the occasion for the coming into existence of the architect. It was not the other way round. Man was not born with an itch to co-ordinate things. He was born with an itch to make things—things for delight and things for use. Only after very many centuries did it occur to him to put two and two together—to construct, to co-ordinate.

Further, it is important that we should grasp the fact that this development from simple to complex does not mean a development from worse to better, nor from better to worse. The question of quality does not necessarily enter in. To get cleverer, to get more knowing is not to get better—nor is it necessarily to get worse even though the danger be apparently rather in that direction. The sculptor is not a better man nor a more perfect man than the architect, nor is the architect a better or more perfect man than the sculptor. This development is not necessarily qualitative at all. A work of sculpture is neither better nor worse than a work of construction—a work of architecture. On the other hand, a work of architecture is, as we have seen *a priori*, composed, it is a composition—it is made up of

works of sculpture and it is therefore of the greatest value, to architecture that there be a good supply of intelligent sculptors—and in early building we find the greater intelligence, the more developed consciousness, with the sculptors rather than with the architects. Individual things are in primitive times more excellent than constructions. This is easily understood, and, except in a few very remarkable periods of civilization, it has always been so. For as the love of one's wife and children is necessarily more intense than the love of one's fellow villagers or than the love of one's fellow countrymen, so the love of the thing a man shapes with his own hands is necessarily more intense than the love of that which is made by co-ordinating the labour of others and, other things being equal, it is intensity of love that makes good quality.

In the broad view of human history, then, it is clear that the maker of individual things and, as regards three-dimensional things, we may say the maker of works of sculpture is the type of the workman and he is the type of the artist, artifex, artificer, artisan. In the course of time, the need for co-ordination is felt and a new type of workman, the architect, comes into existence.

It is probable that the architect's job properly so called is a development of one or other of three previously existing functions. Either he is a workman (a sculptor, in fact) who having more experience than others and more power of command (and perhaps less appetite for manual labour...) is naturally called upon to oversee and even to originate the

co-ordinated plan. Or he may be simply the person who wants the thing which is to be constructed (the client in fact, as he is called in modern jargon). Such a person may in primitive times very well take on the job of overseeing and co-ordinating as, even nowadays, to the horror of the professional architect, he very often does.

Or the architect may be a development of the slave master and this is probably the most common type of him in a primitive society—the man trained and used to the job of making other men work. The contractor's foreman or the architect's clerk of works is the sort of man who in primitive times takes the place of architect. The kind of man who is called architect nowadays—coming from a class quite removed from that of slaves, wage-earners, or workmen—whatever we may call them—trained to the work as a man of culture—seeing it as a 'fine' art and looking for clients as one looks for hat pegs (that is, things upon which one may hang one's ideas) such a man can hardly have existed in primitive times and can only exist in civilizations wherein the great majority of men have ceased to be minds and have become mere hands or tools.

So in primitive times the relation of architecture and sculpture was one in which the architecture was subordinate to the sculpture. The architect as slave master may well have been very much the opposite of a subordinate, but the work he had to perform was not that of a master mind. It was that of a master of other men's bodies more than anything else. But in the course of the development of civiliza-

tion and culture the job of the architect emerges from the business of mere slave driving and becomes a recognizable job—desirable over and above that of each individual workman and more than mere co-operation—it becomes the job of co-ordination. The idea of an order independent of the order of the parts emerges.

Nevertheless, in the absence of machinery in the modern sense of the word and in the absence of a highly industrialized society, in a society wherein the subdivision of labour is not carried very far—not farther, in fact, than seems compatible with the well-doing of the work and the well-making of the thing—in a society not yet ruled by its men of commerce or its financiers—a society wherein men of religion and men of might vie with one another for the mastery and have not yet succumbed to the men of money—in such a society the emergence of the architect takes place naturally enough and does not spell, as it does to-day, the degradation of all other workmen. We may see this very clearly whether in ancient India or Greece—even in ancient Rome, largely commercialized as she became—and in mediaeval Europe.

In such times and places the architect is a combination of the experienced workman and the experienced client.

He is not a workman become man of business as is our modern builder and building contractor—neither is he a sort of proxy for the client. You may say that in such times the experienced workman is the architect par excellence, but he is one who works in direct collaboration with the

client. What the client wants he makes—because the client knows what he wants. But he makes it as he wants to make it, because he knows how it should be made.

This is a very satisfactory state of affairs and a very stable one too—provided the government of a country be kept out of the hands of commercial people, whose only recognizable appetite is one for money. And under such a régime the relationship between architecture and sculpture was generally all that could be desired.

That a building was a thing of parts and that every part was a work of sculpture, though, as far as I know, never expressed in words and probably never even consciously thought, was everywhere the mode in practice. But with the decay of religion and the decay of the power of princes, with the rise of the power of merchantmen, all these things decayed. By the close of the middle ages—as, centuries before, in Egypt, Greece and Rome and as, in our own time, in India and Japan—the downfall was completed. The burst of enthusiasm which we call ‘the Renaissance’ was after all simply the grand processional entry of the new régime. It was like Mr Gordon Selfridge coming to London heralded by a blare of trumpets played by the best musicians. The music was grand—the noise immense. The golden age was ushered in and the gold is now all in the United States. And there also may be seen all that our civilization stands for.

I do not think there is any occasion to describe in much detail the historical process by which, at the time of the Renaissance, the architect as we now know him superseded

the architect of the middle ages. The concurrent enthusiasms of the Renaissance and the Protestant Reformation, coming as they did at the moment of the great expansion of trade and the power of merchants, amply sufficed to overthrow the prestige of mediaeval art. Moreover, mediaeval art had come to decrepitude in any case; it was doing no more than wallow in cleverness and self-glorification. Such things as Henry VII's chapel at Westminster could be fruitful of nothing. It was the end.

It followed naturally enough, therefore, that the enthusiasm for the revival of classical forms should be widespread and it followed equally naturally that the designing of buildings in the novel manner could only be done by a novel class of designers—men risen not from the ranks of builders but from a cultured and travelled class.

Henceforth, the builder is less and less the designer. He becomes more and more the mere contractor—the man who collects and controls materials and labour. And the architect becomes less and less the builder and the less he is a builder the more he is at the mercy of this or that stylistic revival or innovation. You may now, if you will, have a building in any style from China to Peru.

Far be it from me to imply that everything is now bad. We are indeed surrounded with good things. There is little doubt that in the matters of comfort and safety we have made very considerable improvements in some directions. For though there must be many more deaths caused by our modern methods of travelling than were caused in other

times by horse traffic, yet the fact that you can now go from Paris to London in a warm airplane in an hour or two and sleep all the way or, for more ordinary people, you can do the same journey in eight hours and sleep most of the way and suffer seasickness for only a few hours instead of for the best part of a day—these things are not to be called bad. But when it comes to the consideration of the aesthetic quality of things made, then the story is rather a different one and our enquiry as to the relationship between architecture and sculpture wears a very different appearance.

We have long since departed from that state of affairs wherein client and master-workman contrived to perform the job of architect between them. We have now a highly industrialized society and a system of mass production and subdivided labour in which the architect is no longer the ruler of a gang of more or less good workmen but is simply a man who imposes his ideas upon a mob of more or less unwilling slaves. Under such circumstances sculpture is really non-existent and the name is confined to those two small branches of it which we call ornamental carving and figure sculpture. The former is, for the most part, the job of mechanics trained to follow architects' drawings accurately—the latter is the job of a few inhabitants of those hot-houses we call studios, people who specialize in the imitation, in stone or bronze, of nude or draped models sentimentally attitudinizing to represent Art and Science or Peace and Plenty.

That is what sculpture has come to in relation to archi-

itecture, and as that is apparently the kind of thing architects and their clients want, it is not surprising that no artist of any merit is now to be found regularly employed in connection with architecture.

In fact the state of affairs which we saw to prevail in primitive times has been exactly reversed. In those times all workmen were, in the fundamental sense, sculptors, and the architect scarcely existed. To-day the architect is paramount and there is not a sculptor, not an architectural sculptor worth mentioning, to be found. No workman of to-day is in any sense a responsible artist—nor is he expected to be.

I do not wish to suggest that this is in any way a state of affairs for which architects are to blame. It is no more their fault than it is that of the workmen. The unfathomable maw of concupiscence has engulfed the whole world and in spite of a veneer of welfare work and Carnegie libraries, in spite of 'wireless' telegraphy and many other sorts of dope, we are not blind to the fact that the thing called art, the very flower of man's intelligence, the only intransitive activity of which he is capable, the one thing which so much as aims at having intrinsic value, is now the occupation of very few persons—the vast majority of our people are degraded to the level of mere sensitive plants and of the few so occupied, the kind called architect is forced to employ mere dolts, and the kind called painters and sculptors can get no work but either portraiture or such essays in aesthetics as a small coterie of cultured intellectuals will buy.

The revolt against the academies with which we are familiar—the thing called ‘the Post-Impressionist Movement’—is doomed to frustration. The revolt is without intellectual principles; it is governed by emotion. And even were it otherwise it would be the most forlorn of hopes, for painted walls and windows no less than sculptured walls and pillars are things that grow upwards from the scaffold and not downwards from the studio.

To-day architecture is what it has always been—the co-ordination of the parts of a building into an ordered unity. But sculpture is what it has never been before—even in the worst days of ancient Rome—it is a mere appanage, a mere fal-lal which architects indulge in if they or their clients can afford it. We sculptors are no longer an integral part of the building gang. We are at best a sort of skilled workman who is called in to supply a special furniture or enrichment. Certainly we make no complaint if, as occasionally happens, we are asked to carve this or that figure or frieze, but there is necessarily a fundamental incompatibility between our work and that of the mechanics with which it is placed. To place a photograph of a person in the middle of a painted portrait as being more like the sitter than the face the painter would be likely to make is as absurd as the sham gothic of the Tower Bridge is absurd in conjunction with the ironwork which supports it.

The architect is no longer the leader, the ruler of a gang of good workmen—masons, carvers, carpenters, plumbers and what not—he is simply the designer of things for the

execution of which he is dependent upon the labours of a crowd of unintelligent and unwilling wage earners. And when in his enthusiasm he introduces into this crowd the thing called a sculptor it is as though he placed a real plum in the middle of a concrete pudding. And as like as not his concrete pudding will have been designed on classical lines or, if for church consumption, in the gothic style, and the unfortunate purveyor of plums is then expected to make his plum to match.

It is gratifying therefore to see that the tendency among architects to-day is to abandon this introduction of the sculptor altogether. Obviously there is no place for him. Let him retire from the architectural world and confine himself to such plum making and even jam making as he can conduct independently of architects. There need be no ill-feeling in this retirement. It is not the architect's fault if the operations of building are impossible nowadays except by means of the contractor and his dehumanized mob of building operatives—that is what they call themselves! Buildings must be built, and they can be built no other way—there is no one else to build them.

The relationship between architecture and sculpture to-day, then, is a very bad relationship and the sculptor is a very poor relation. He is either a mere hack, like the men who carve corinthian capitals for insurance buildings or those who do gothic tracery for churches, or, if he is some kind of independent artist called in by the architect to do figure sculpture, he is either a mere sentimentalist who, if left to

himself, would do things like the Queen Victoria Memorial, or he is an impossible person like me whom nothing will content but a new heaven and a new earth. In no case is he in any sense a really necessary member of the building gang and in no case is his work an integral part of the building itself.

The best modern architects no longer employ him and those are the best modern buildings which, like railway viaducts and embankments, are without any embellishment whatever.

Millions of bricks, thousands of tons of concrete, hundreds of hands—such are the materials and such the men with which a modern building is made. The best architects are those who most courageously face these conditions, and the best modern buildings are those in which these conditions have been most logically applied.

Such are the conclusions to which, from a study of history and from a priori reasoning, we are bound to come. The will is free but thought is not free. Its conclusions are inevitable, and we are forced to the conclusion that under modern conditions there is no necessary place for sculpture except on the mantel-shelf or in the museum.

IV

WHAT of the future?

Short of the new heaven and new earth without which I and some others will never be content, it seems that the only thing now to be done is to press still further

along the lines indicated by present conditions. More and more we must take it for granted that architecture and sculpture have been divorced.

In the immediate future, no doubt, many people will try to blind themselves to the true state of affairs. They will go on pretending that all is well or, if not well, at least reparable. There will be grand and imposing insurance buildings and banks and town halls and churches erected, and the dictionaries of classical and mediaeval ornament will be consulted as usual, and capitals and cornices, traceries and pinnacles applied to buildings of which the true nature is iron and ferro-concrete. But undoubtedly this phase will pass—it is already passing—and we shall have equally grand and imposing, nay, much grander and more imposing and much more really beautiful and impressive buildings erected which will be the logical outcome of the facts of modern life. There will be no sculpture in the old sense at all, but in a new sense there will be a very grand sculpture. The architect who was formerly only a sculptor in a figurative sense will become a sculptor indeed. By means of iron and concrete, manipulated by the hands and machines supplied by the contractor (hands no longer unwilling because adequately housed and paid and supplied with lectures on Shakespeare in the evenings) by such means the architect will erect great buildings, and even small ones, which shall be in a true sense works of sculpture—that is, things of three dimensions of which the shape is in itself delightful to the mind.

A work of architecture will cease to be a thing of parts—each one of which is a work of sculpture. There will no longer be any parts. There will be one thing, modelled, as it were, by the architect. The architects will be the only sculptors. And it is to be noted that the modern architect sculptor is a modeller not a carver. The steel frame of his building is his ‘armature’; the facing is the clay he models upon it.

Of course there will still be a demand for little bits of ornamental carving and little bits of figure sculpture—if only mascots for motor cars—but such things will no longer be a part of architecture.

Whether such a régime will be stable is another question. I am myself convinced that it cannot be so because it deprives the great majority of men of that responsibility which is part of the nature of man, which is in fact the one thing which differentiates him from the flowers of the field and the brutes that perish. For a time the security and stability of a well organized servile state will allure him and enthrall him. Culture and amusement in his spare time will seem a sufficient oblation to his humanity. The urge to make things to the satisfaction of his own mind and of his own free will is already almost completely gone and in the near future it will seem to have disappeared entirely. But one way or another the thing “not dead but sleeping” will awake and then there will be trouble. It is very likely that the awakening will take place as the result of a breakdown of international finance such that the highly organized servile

state will be ruined and men will be suddenly, or more or less suddenly, thrown back into primitive conditions—and such a breakdown is practically inevitable because the rulers in our modern states are not the men of wisdom or sanctity, but the men of financial power who have won their positions of authority not by reason of their superior culture or understanding of the needs of human life, but simply by their superior gifts of acquisitiveness. Such rulers cannot make a stable state. Internal strife and international war will break them and they cannot avert these things because the principle of their being is aggrandisement not peace. Peace is 'the tranquillity of order' and there is no order where avarice rules.

Or it may be that the breakdown will come from below. It may be that the special class of workers fostered (like lap-dogs) to supply the ornamental knick-knacks and idols for which there will always be a demand—this special class will be a cause of jealousy. There will be all sorts of wangled exemptions from the universal servile labour—just as there were all sorts of wangled exemptions from the universal conscription during the last war. There will be conscientious objectors on the one hand and so-called 'indispensables' on the other. But whereas the war was a matter of a few years only, the servile state will last for several generations. There will be time for the growth of very big sores indeed.

However we need not thus enter into the realms of prophecy. Sufficient for the day is the evil thereof, and we

need do no more now than note the fact that we are approaching the full circle through which all civilizations turn.

One thing is certain: man is a responsible creature—he has free will. Such is the very centre of his being and all men, high and low, wise and foolish, share the same nature.

But this freedom is not incompatible with discipline, it is only incompatible with irresponsibility. To deprive men of responsibility is not merely to deprive them of freedom, it is to deprive them of manhood itself. And in no sphere is this responsibility more connatural to man than in the sphere of work. What he does, what he makes, is the very fruit of the tree—the thing by which he shall be known.

If we have succeeded in making a civilization in which the majority of men are not to be held responsible for any work they do or anything they make—and such is the thing called industrialism—then, whether we like it or not, we have succeeded in making a civilization unnatural to man and unstable in its essence. The intelligent and responsible craftsman is not only no longer in existence—he is no longer wanted.

I am not in the least saying whether or no this is a bad thing. I am not saying that factory watches are bad watches or that concrete mixed by servile labour is bad concrete. I am only saying that a civilization depending upon the reduction of the great majority of workers to a position of irresponsibility is in the nature of things an unstable civilization, because contrary to the nature of man. Grand

as may be its material achievements—and what could be grander than the ‘Titanic’ or the London, Midland and Scottish Railway, what more marvellous than wireless telegraphy and the countless achievements of electrical science, what more astonishing than the possession by every household of innumerable contrivances such as even kings could not formerly possess?—grand as may be the achievements of modern civilization, there is no reason whatever why we should be blind to the fact that the whole thing is founded upon an unnatural condition and is therefore necessarily unstable. Let those who like it enjoy it while it lasts

We artists represent the normal man, the maker of things. For us this age is less dazzling. And the modern world, though it give us titles and estates, though it pamper us and spoil us and flatter us, can only refuse us the one thing we hold desirable. It can give us an honoured place—it cannot, even if it would, give us an honourable job.

ART AND LOVE

I

RICHES AND POVERTY

GOD. Let us start with the fact that the word 'God' necessarily connotes a Being infinite in his perfections. The problem of evil (how, if God be good, evil can be) need not here concern us. We may leave the proof of God's existence to those whose business it is. The belief in God we shall assume and God is infinite in his perfections! It follows that man's reason of being is that he may know, serve, and love God. Every activity of man must be directed to those ends; otherwise man is false to himself, for he is acting against his nature, and false to God, for he is acting against his maker.

For such a creature as man, then, the work he does is not primarily that he may earn the food he eats, the shelter he needs, and the food and shelter for the children he begets. Food and shelter are not the ends for which man works. On the contrary, man's work is the end to which food and shelter are the means. We say that man's work is the end. That is to say, it is the immediate or proximate end. The ultimate end, the final end is God. All food and shelter are things to help man in his work; all work is to help man to his God.

Now under the stress of an irreligious and therefore an ill-organized society these things are forgotten or denied;

God himself is forgotten or denied and men think of themselves as working merely in order to live. Food and shelter are proclaimed to be the ends for which men work and, being reduced to the level of a means to merely earthly existence, work is degraded and derided. This is indeed the curse of Adam; for Adam sinned when he fell from contemplation, when he exchanged the freedom of God's service for the service of an unjust steward, as a soldier sins when, if only for a moment, he prefers his own interest to that of his king. But if work itself be degraded and cursed, the living which it is supposed to bring is very much applauded. Nobody honours the workman, but rich men sit in the places of kings. Money-making is the object of all labour, and avarice is the greatest of the virtues. The trader was the first to usurp the position of governor, and now the financier pure and simple has deprived the trader of his supremacy. The modern world is at the mercy of the Bank!

Let us recollect ourselves. "Blessed are the poor in spirit," that is to say, the humble and they whose spirit is not set upon riches. "Consider the lilies of the field . . . and if the grass of the field . . . God doth so clothe how much more you, O ye of little faith? Be not solicitous therefore, saying: What shall we eat or wherewithal shall we be clothed? For after all these things do the heathens seek. For your Father knoweth that you have need of all these things. Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his justice and all these things shall be added unto you¹." "Go to now, ye rich men, weep

¹ Gospel of St Matthew v and vi

and howl in your miseries which shall come upon you. Your riches are putrid¹."

But the implication of this teaching is not simply that solicitousness is a bad attitude of mind. The teaching is not merely negative; it is chiefly positive in its application. "Seek ye first the kingdom of God." And such seeking is chiefly, and for the great majority of men, to be undertaken through work, and thus work becomes not merely the means to food and shelter but the means to the finding of God. So has work always been when workmen have not been at the mercy of avarice and avaricious men. That is why, until the modern commercial state overwhelmed us, all the works of men were works of art; for a work of art is simply a thing made by a lover, and God alone is beloved.

In these days of factory production on the one hand and excessively self-conscious and often eccentric artistic production on the other, such a definition of art may seem fantastic. Nevertheless things are properly defined by their most and not by their least significant attributes and, as no one would think it an adequate definition of Man to say that he is a two-legged mammal, so no one should be satisfied with the definition of Art that it is simply skill, or that it is skill in the imitation of nature, or that it is the expression of emotion, or even that it is the expression of the workman's sense of beauty, though art may include all these things.

But to say that a work of art is a work of love is not to

¹ Epistle of St James v

say very much about its material aspect. Such a definition applies rather to the hidden spring than to the water of the fountain. Yet it is fundamental; for as the soul is the **FORM** of the body, that is to say, the determinant of its species, so the underlying principle, the formative principle of the kind of work called art is the spirit of love in which it is conceived.

MAKING AND DOING

When a piece of work is not merely done but made, it is a work of art. In these two words doing and making, we have the distinction clearly exposed. We speak of doing when we imply a means to an end. We speak of making when we envisage an end. *Recta ratio agibilium*, the right ordering of deeds to be done, that is the domain of prudence which has regard to the last end of man as man. *Recta ratio factibilium*, the right ordering of things to be made, that is the domain of art which has regard to the ultimate object of work as work. The last end of man is union with God. The ultimate object of work is the praise and glory of God. These are hard facts, not sentimental aspirations, and it is because they have ceased to be regarded as hard facts that prudence has come to mean mere worldly carefulness and art has become man's praise and glorification of himself.

I am not here concerned to suggest remedies for this state of affairs, nor to discuss whether this or that political reform would do anything to bring the mind of man back again to a true orientation. My business here is first to

make clear what in fact art is and to show that it is the peculiar and appropriative activity of man as the lover of God. Secondly I wish to deal with those particular works of art in which love is the theme, the subject matter, the material form as well as the immaterial form and *raison d'être*. For all works of art have love for their reason of being but not all have love for their bodily theme.

II

ART AND WORSHIP

I BEGIN by saying that a work of art is the work of a lover. It is a lover's worship.

But the worship which art implies is not necessarily a stated, a conscious worship. The worship that art implies is simply that by which a man devotes himself to the well-making of the thing to be made, be it house or chair, or carved stone idol, be it his family or his own soul. Though he may never say the thing in words, the artist is one who devotes himself to the work not simply for the sake of the function which the work when done will perform, as a house to shelter a family (that is the business of prudence, and of course the artist, as man, must be a prudent man), but his devotion is to the work as a thing worth doing well for its own sake. Now normally no man takes up this attitude to his work, no man gives this worship to the work of his hands, no man makes this act of love unless he be, whether consciously or not, a lover of God. That is the inevitable implication; for to make a chair as well as possible

is either to make an act of charity to the man who shall use it or it is an act of charity to God. You cannot be charitable to a chair. But from man's point of view, what is worth making is worth making badly! Only from the point of view of God is it worth while to make a thing as well as it can be made. Hence to make a thing well for its own sake is tantamount to making it so for God's sake.

It is for this reason that the activity called art is the peculiar and appropriate activity of man. For man is compounded of matter and spirit, both real and both good, and here on earth all that he learns he must learn by means of his senses (there is no other channel of knowledge for him), and all that he does he must do by and in material things. But doing is by definition a transitive activity. The deed, as such, is but a means to an end. Making, however, is by definition that activity in which the thing made is regarded as an end; otherwise it is not really made but merely done—as when a factory 'turns out' a clock, or clocks by the thousand. Of such clocks it cannot be said that anyone has made them; they are simply the product of a number of men doing no more than they are told.

More particularly is art the peculiar and appropriate occupation of men when men are consciously devoted to the service and love of God. Then indeed no other manner of occupation will seem worthy. Those men who give themselves entirely to contemplation, who would seem therefore least to merit the name of artist, are in fact the most completely artists, for not only are they artificers in the shaping

of their own souls, but they are, God guiding, artificers in the shaping of life itself. The religious life is man's greatest work of art. It is a comparatively simple matter to shape a stone to one's liking, but the devils themselves conspire to hinder man's efforts to shape his own life. Therefore, though not every man is called to the life of 'religion,' every man is called to the love of God and every man is called to give love to the work of his hands. Every man is called to be an artist.

But just as the good religious prays without noticing that he is praying, so the good workman works without noticing that he is an artist. Self-consciousness is not essential; indeed it is a hindrance. Self-forgetfulness, self-abnegation is the proper state of mind for man. Thus, and thus alone, can he collaborate with God in creating.

III

LOVE AND NATURE

IN all times and places it has been man's delight to think of love. This is not surprising, for God is Love, and Love is the end for which man renders to God his service. The marriage of the soul with God is the end for which the soul is created. God is the lover of the soul. God is the bridegroom. God is the husband. God is the father and, if she will, the soul is the sweetheart, the bride.... "Dilectus meus est mihi et ego illi."

In all times and places it has been man's delight to think of human love as a type of the Divine Love—Divine Love is

its prototype—and of human marriage as a type of the marriage of the soul with God. The barbarous rites with which barbarous peoples have surrounded human wooing and human marriage have this significance. However dim may be the consciousness of such peoples, however oppressed they may be by the gaunt struggle for existence and survival, love is never either unmixed lust or simply a secular arrangement for reproduction. It has been left to the cultured intellectuals of a decadent Europe and America to pride themselves upon a supposed emancipation from such 'barbarous' ideas and to set up a notion of marriage from which all divine significance has been expunged.

Simple people, between whom and God there is no barrier of pride, whose minds are not clouded or confused by the innumerable theories and hypotheses of experimental science, who, moreover, are not the possessors of great material wealth or highly organized by subdivision of labour for the production of wealth for others, such people, such souls are readily attuned to the divine wind. For them it seems most natural and most reasonable that all the things of earth should be analogues of the divine reality, echoes of the divine voice, material counterparts of the divine ideas. And if the trees and rocks, the thunder and the sea, the frightful avidity of animal life and the loveliness of flowers are so many hints of God who made them, how much more obviously are the things of humanity analogues of the things of God! And among all such things, the union of man and woman takes the highest place and is the most potent symbol.

Therefore it is that, outside the commercial civilizations of the western world, love and marriage take their place as types of divine union, and everywhere love and marriage are the subject-matter, the theme, of religious writers, singers, painters and sculptors. It is true that love is the theme of western writers also but, with them, the idea of love is now entirely free from divine signification, either explicit or implied, and, however much they may still be under the heel of the old tradition which makes marriage the inevitable 'happy ending,' yet, as religion decays, the inevitability of such an ending becomes less and less and the notion of a permanent union, "till death do us part," is more and more frequently relegated to the 'scrap-heap' of outworn ideas.

Further, it is to be noted that the more the divine background disappears, the more the prudishness of the police becomes the standard of ethics and aesthetics alike. The guardianship of divine Truth is not the business of such governors. Their business is the convenience of a society devoted to commercial prosperity. Under such an aegis the arts are necessarily degraded to the level of the merely sentimental or the merely sensual, and, while the sentimental is everywhere applauded, the sensual is a source of panic.

The divine background has disappeared and the modern world fondly imagines that it has removed the veil with which a more superstitious generation shrouded reality whereas, actually, it has simply blinded itself to the reality of which material life is the veil. Such is the state of dis-

piritedness in which we now find ourselves. Such is the soil in which forlorn painters and poets must plant their seedlings. Woe to them if the nakedness with which they clothe their meaning be anything but sentimental. But woe more deep if indeed they have no meaning, if they also know neither God nor gods.

IV

LOVE AND MANNERS

AGAIN let us recollect ourselves. "Blessed are the clean of heart, for they shall see God¹." "He that loveth not knoweth not God, for God is love²." "Love God and make what you will³."

But such sayings require interpretation and primarily the interpretation of those responsible for their original enunciation. In the absence of such interpretation, in a world in which private judgement is the only test of truth, confusion necessarily results. Production is merely idiosyncratic; criticism is devoid of principles. The artist is the inventor of his own religion or merely a purveyor of lovable sweetmeats. The critic and the buyer, for the most part having no religion at all, are simply concerned with what takes their fancy. Such a condition of things is thoroughly abnormal and decadent. It is the inevitable accompaniment of prolonged commercial prosperity, of prolonged commercial insubordination. If we survey the civilizations of

¹ St Matthew v, 8

² 1st Epistle of St John iv, 8

³ St Augustine. "Dilige Deum et fac quod vis."

the past, or the life, even now, of those races and peoples still free from commercial exploitation, we find a very different state of mind, and if we take India as an example it is not because India is unique but because India is typical. Moreover, India is comparatively close at hand, and in India the religious impulse has permeated life and work almost up to our own times.

Now in India love has always been the theme par excellence of religious art—whether plastic, pictorial or literary. Manners also are permeated with religion, and even during the marital embrace itself the man and wife, rising above animal circumstance, will accompany the pious act, for such it is, and such they think it, with ritual chant. How far are we removed in modern England from such a possibility¹? In England even the old-time custom of ‘grace’ at meals has almost disappeared. It is not now considered polite to intrude religion into outward life or even into polite conversation. No wonder! for the religion of propriety, the state-established religion of England, has never swayed the minds of men, and Christianity, only now emerging from the penal times, is emerging shorn of all those customs which make every act a religious and a ritual act and every moment a step towards God. European scepticism has only recently

¹ Compare, e.g. *Mediaeval Nuptial Ceremoniarium*, wherein it is ordered that when the newly married pair are got to bed, the priest and acolytes shall enter, with censer and holy water, to give the Church’s blessing on their union.

reached India and India has only recently proclaimed the right to a commercialism of her own. Before all is destroyed let us admire and praise the works of her past and especially those which most poignantly embody the recognition of man's love of God and of God's love for man. The necessary timidity of town-ridden England, nay, the necessary restriction imposed upon the idiosyncrasy of painters and poets, need not blind us to the fact that the physical union of lovers is a God-appointed act and that its representation in word or work is not in itself an evil thing. But, photographically depicted, sex representation fails of its justification, and in the all-pervading photography of modern European art, wherein everything which is not photographic is thought to belong to a lower order of things, it is not tolerable. This is necessary and right. Where you have the copying of nature regarded as the chief aim of the artist it is necessary that the artist be warned off those particular things in nature which, viewed merely photographically, are the most provocative of disorder. Only where the non-photographic, the conventional, the symbolic, the hieratic, is regarded as being the proper nature of artistic work and all else is regarded as indecency, tour de force or triviality, only there can you have the representation of marriage either holily conceived or tolerably executed. Such conditions do not exist in England to-day; such conditions have already almost departed from India.

In fact all photographic representation is indecent, whether it be concerned with the human body or anything else.

The photographic representation of the intimacy of lovers is to be thought more indecent than such representation of landscape only because it is more provocative of disorder, for no other reason. The more the mind is weaned from this cult of verisimilitude, the more do such exhibitions as that of the Royal Academy become revolting in their indecent blandishments of merely personal human emotion.

But it must not be supposed that a conventional style of art was originally or may now be used as a cloak for sensualism. Hieratic is indeed a more appropriate word than conventional. Hieratic art, that is, a priestly art, an art in accordance with priestly dictation¹, is that style of art in which divine meaning is enshrined in material works. By Catholic philosophers it is said that "the soul is the FORM of the body," and of hieratic art it may be said that divinity is the FORM of it—the form, that is the formative principle, the thing in accordance with whose nature and powers the material body takes shape. The form of an hieratic art is the divine rule, the divine order.

Is it possible that the strongest of all the passions can be correlated to a divine order? Is it possible that, in pictorial or literary art, the passions of men can be subordinated to a

¹ Far be it from me to imply that artists should submit to the artistic dictation of priests. At the altar and in the confessional the priest is impregnable, but as critic of the works of men he is no better placed than other men. The priestly dictation which is the basis of hieratic art is not aesthetic: it is moral and dogmatic.

divine rule? If it should be thought that we are assuming too much in saying that the worships and images of primitive or alien peoples are anything but sensuality, let us remember that the present frame of mind of the town-bred people of Europe is such as to make it almost impossible for them to think clearly on the subject. Because we worship ourselves and are rightly afraid to withdraw the police supervision of our public picture galleries it does not follow that other peoples and other ages see no more of God in nature than we do. Let us also remember the literature of Christianity. From the Song of Songs to St Bernard and St John of the Cross, from St Teresa of Avila to Saint Thérèse of Lisieux, the theme of love has never been without vivid and unveiled expression. And if the paintings and sculptures of mediaeval Europe are less unclothed than those of India, the differences of climate and race are sufficient explanation. In all cases, however unconsciously and with whatever accompaniment of philosophical error and uncouth theology, God has been worshipped as the lover, the fount of love, Love itself. The blatantly phallic art of Central African tribes is no more a degradation than is the blatantly photographic art of modern Europe—no more and no less. Both are departures from the norm of human understanding; both are the product of mental decay. The norm is seen in the early art of Greece, in the early art of mediaeval Europe, in the peasant art of all the world, in the plainchant of the Roman Church and in all such music and, pre-eminently, in Rajput painting and the sculptures of India

and China. But to all these arts the photographic is abhorrent. All are hieratic arts; all are the arts of peoples for whom religion is the main motive and of whose religion love is the beginning and the end.

v

CLOTHES AND NAKEDNESS

I HAVE said that the differences of race and climate were sufficient to account for the fact that the art of mediaeval Europe is on the whole less unclothed than that of the East and this is true. But it is only the material half of the story. The spiritual half is to be found in the fact that Christian art is 'the art of man redeemed'.

Let me not be misunderstood. I do not mean that nakedness, either in thought or in work or in act, is in itself the mark of the unredeemed or is in itself either unlawful or unseemly. Clothes have become the rule not because nakedness is wrong in itself but because clothes (robes) are in themselves right and appropriate to the dignity of human beings. Moreover, human beings, unlike the beasts that perish and the flowers of the field, are rational creatures, therefore have free will and are persons. To expose the person is the indecent act, whether such exposure be what is commonly meant by the phrase or be merely the wearing of one's heart upon one's sleeve.

The notion of clothes as coverings used for the sake of warmth is quite subordinate and extrinsic to man as man. The notion of clothes used for the sake of physical con-

venience (as boots, belts and hats and things with pockets in them) is quite subordinate and extrinsic. Only less subordinate is the notion of clothes as specially covering the organs of sex. Such covering is necessary, first, because of the shyness we feel at the exposure of organs which, though honourable on account of their sexual significance, are also organs of less honourable associations. Secondly, such clothing is necessary on account of decency properly so called, that is on account of the desirability of hiding those motions which are called irregular in men and regular in women—motions over which we have an imperfect control—motions which, though not always betraying the thoughts and inclinations of the individual, are often indicative of such. Here is the root of the matter—the exposure of the person, the exposure of his or her inmost mind. Here indeed is a wearing of the heart on the sleeve! That Adam, as it is recorded, was ashamed of his nakedness and covered his middle with an apron does not imply that had he not sinned he would never have worn clothes but merely that the loss of integrity following upon his sin was such that he had need of that special garment. We may suppose that in a state of innocence Adam would have used clothes in their proper manner for adornment and dignity alone and not, as with us, for the reason of decency also.

Among friends, between whom there is a real community of mind and an established code of behaviour and control, complete nakedness, as when bathing or dancing or even when doing nothing at all, may be allowable in practice as

it is undoubtedly right in theory. But how seldom in the welter of a disgusting and disgusted civilization can such conditions be found! Between husband and wife and children we may imagine it to be possible; yet even among such there is often a lack of real community. As often as not even between husband and wife such a relationship is thought to be either comic or foul. That William Blake walked naked in the garden with his wife is considered to be either a joke or yet another proof that artists are as immoral in public as stockbrokers are in private. Worse! for the artist has at no time the shame which the stockbroker feels and he does not know "the things that no fellow should do." Among friends nakedness may be allowable, for among friends there need be no shame and no loss of control. But, even so, it is clear, and let us be clear about it, that nakedness is not in itself a perfect state for man. Neither nakedness nor covering are to be taken as indicative of right-mindedness. We demand a certain minimum of covering for the sake of social order and, whether enforced or not, we use a certain minimum for the sake of privacy because community of goods, unlike community of mind, is hateful to man—hateful because destructive of his quality—destructive because dissipating. But primarily, and, speaking in an absolute sense, clothes are neither for convenience nor for decency. Clothes are for dignity and adornment. This may sound ridiculous when we call to mind the clothes of modern Europe and America. But such clothes are a degradation and this degradation has come about simply be-

cause we have allowed notions of convenience and decency to override and destroy the notion of dignity. We actually think that clothes should fit the body! They should do no such thing. They should no more fit the body than does the mane of a lion or the toga of a Roman. We think it indecent not to wear body-fitting underclothes. It is not. If worn for the sake of warmth, such garments are allowable; otherwise they have no business to exist.

Nothing is more clearly indicative of the degradation of the modern world than the dress of modern men, and the argument that it is convenient is dragging women into the same degradation. But the essence of indecency, as of all sins, is injustice. It is unjust to cause displeasure. How could it be anything but unpleasant to see the misshapen limbs, the slack paunches, the untutored organs of modern town-bred people? That we endure our faces and hands is surprising enough. How vastly preferable is the state of affairs in convents where even heads and hands are covered. How easily, we may believe, monks and nuns could, if they would, show us bodies as tutored, and as beautiful because as tutored, as their minds. Fat, perhaps, like the Angelic Doctor! Thin, perhaps, like the Rose of Lima! Fat or thin, but without either the conscious over-development of a university athlete or the loose-bellied meanness of a city starveling—all portraying the equipoise of Christ!

Further, indecency is unjust because it provokes injustice. If it do not provoke anger it may provoke lust. The essence of lust is covetousness and covetousness leads to

theft. Fornication is theft; adultery is theft. Among friends such sins may not be provoked; but among strangers how could it be otherwise?

Let us, however, leave the question of decency in the hands of those best fitted to deal with it—in the hands of the Church as regards teaching and in the hands of the police as regards the enforcing of an enlightened standard so taught. Here I am concerned with the question of art and love, not that of prudence and sin. But commercialism has made cowards of us all, and man has forgotten, in the business of getting and spending, that his first business is to fight, his last business is to fight and that his only peace is a victory. As workman, no less than as soldier, he is a fighter. As lover he is a fighter and at all times he must wear the garb of a man of honour. Woman is not a fighter. She preserves what man wins. She urges him to win more. And at all times she must wear the garb of a preserver—mother, nurse or nun.

Nevertheless the exaggerated difference between the clothes of men and women with which we are familiar to-day is essentially absurd. There is neither cause nor occasion for such differentiation. That all men, from King to street-arab, should wear the same uniform (coat, trousers, collar and tie—and other ridiculous gadgets) is absurd. That all women, from Queen to prostitute, should dress alike is absurd. But it is no less absurd that the clothes of men and women should be so different. Men and women have essentially the same physical structure and have therefore the

same mode of progression and movement of limbs. Only in periods of commercialism and social cowardice, periods of philosophical confusion and religious disintegration, do we find such dead uniformity and such absurd differentiation between the sexes. But if the outward garb of men to-day is absurd, his undergarments are worse; they might almost be called foul. In this respect women's dress has not nearly reached a like absurdity or ugliness and, paradoxical though it may seem, it is more desirable that men should dress more as women do than that women should dress as men.

The tyranny of the tailor must be abolished and that of the hosier laughed to scorn. It is still possible for women to dress themselves as befits human dignity. Men must regain the same privilege. It is still possible for women to buy clothes, even underclothes, which are made well, as works of art, because they are worth making. That such a thing is impossible in the case of men shows more clearly than anything else the absurdity of our civilization. As far as men's clothes are concerned the idea of art has been reduced to its lowest terms; the skill of the maker is all that is left to admire. It is not crime; it is folly.

The great religious periods, that is, the periods in which God has been greatly loved, have always been periods wherein man has greatly loved his fellow men. Nothing is further from the truth than the supposition that 'welfare work' and social legislation are indicative of our love for our fellows, and no advertisement of our degradation as lovers is

more blatant than the unloveliness of the clothes of modern men. Clothes do not make the gentleman nor do they make the lover but they serve to show him up. The clothes of to-day clearly show that man has forgotten his dignity and he has forgotten his dignity because he has forgotten his Love.

VI

IMAGES AND SYMBOLS

BUT if Divine Love be the central truth of the universe and if human love be the most potent symbol of Divine Love, it could hardly but follow that simple people not trained to philosophic thought, living engrossed in the life and struggle of earth, should welcome without misgiving such elementary symbols of love and the fruition of love as we find all over the world. It is, of course, the fashion to-day to make out that these elemental worships are the worships of peoples who have never risen to a civilized standard. This is a misreading of the facts. Such worships are simply the formalization of man's instinctive apprehension of the central meaning of the universe. They exist everywhere at all times. They are not specially confined to uncivilized peoples. Christianity has not denied their truth, certainly the Catholic Church has not (and what else can reasonably be called christian?). Christianity has absorbed such worships, transcended them, and it has done this not so much by destroying their idols as by setting up everywhere the Crucifix on the one hand and the image of Mary on the other. The Crucifix is the image not of the metaphysical fact of uni-

versal love but of the physical fact of God's love for man. It is not an image of the virility of the universe. It is an image of the virility of God himself. "God so loved the world that he gave his only-begotten son." Truth, the Infinite, is a person, not a metaphysical statement and God's love is no longer to be symbolized merely by sexual signs but chiefly by the image of God himself spent utterly for love. God himself has come down to make bread of these stones—to raise up children unto Abraham—and that not by a doctrine only but by an act, the giving of himself—and his Church is his Bride.

But all creation is female to God, and the soul of man is the essentially female thing. The maleness of men is only a shadow of the maleness of God but it is sufficient, when pride possesses us, to lead us astray. Hence it is that rebellion arises. Little man will not surrender to the divine Lover; he would be master of his fate; he would be master of his soul. The image of Mary, therefore, is the christian rejoinder to the Crucifix. "Be it done to me according to thy word." "Grant that I may love thee always: then do with me what thou wilt." Such is the response of love to Love.

The Crucifix is not a symbol for children merely. Indeed, it is not primarily a symbol; it is an image. It is understood by simple and learned alike though the simple often more easily grasp its truth. The Madonna is not a pretty, ideal figure for the elevation of the uncouth—a figure in which the cultured find no satisfaction; it is the

image of man in his true relation to God as the Crucifix is the image of God in his true relation to man.

It is easily seen, then, that as non-christian peoples everywhere have naturally set up sexual symbols of Divine Love, not knowing Christ, so christians, as naturally and often as thoughtlessly and with as little misgiving, have set up everywhere the Crucifix and the Madonna. These are the christian love-tokens.

Again let us not be misunderstood! We are not seeking, as do many students of religion, to reduce christian imagery to the level of non-christian idolatries; we are not trying to discover in christian imagery a hidden idolatry. On the contrary, our concern is to show that non-christian religions, inasmuch as they proclaim that love is the central fact of the universe, proclaim truth; that Christianity has not obliterated that truth but given it divine sanction. It is not civilization that has raised men above the worship of idols.

Therefore the love-song and the love-picture which take human love as the symbol of Divine Love are everywhere recurrent and such love, so taken, is still rightly the theme of themes for poets and picture-makers. None the less the Crucifix and the Madonna transcend all such symbolic things. The image is mightier than the symbol. Even the song of Solomon in all its glory is but a pale ghost before the divine Lily of Calvary. The Song of Songs is but a symbolic poem; the Christ of Calvary is an historic fact. Even the hymn of Mary, the Magnificat, is but a faint reflexion of her

own acceptance of the divine will. So, though the symbol may often be a finer work of art than the image, it is the image and not the symbol that has most enthralled the mind of christian artists as, in spite of the banality and indecency to which the Italian Renaissance has led us, it is reality and not verisimilitude that is the substance of christian art.

CHRISTIANITY AND ART

I SET out in this essay to make two discoveries. In the first place I have to discover what Christianity, i.e., the Catholic Church, has done for Art, and in the second place what, according to the Church, is the relation of Art to Life. The discovery of the practical effect of the Church upon the arts is of much less moment than the discovery of the necessary implications of christian doctrine, but as a tree is known by its fruit, so I will attempt to get knowledge of the doctrine of the Church in the matter of Art and Life by examining first the artistic product for which the Church may have been responsible. It is true that by examining the artistic product I might, if I conducted the examination with sufficient insight, historical sense and knowledge, arrive at a true view of the implications of Catholic doctrine of the relation of Art to Life. But the artistic product of which the Church appears to be the instigator is so manifold and so various, and the period of time with which the examination would have to deal has seen so many changes and revolutions of thought and manners, that it is better to deal with the matter in two distinct parts, in the first to note simply the material facts, and in the second, not drawing conclusions from the first, to set out the fundamental principles of Catholic faith and philosophy and the resulting aesthetic.

WHAT HAS THE CHURCH DONE FOR ART?

THE question is naturally divisible under three heads.

(1) What has she done as teacher? (2) What has she done as artist? (For she is herself the originator of a certain thing, a work of art in its nature—namely, the material structure of the visible Church with its literature and liturgy); and (3) What has she done in the persons of her ministers as buyers and users of buildings and goods (that is, as ‘consumer’)? (a) when her teaching was accepted, (b) to-day, when it is not.

(1) The Church has never formulated any deliberate aesthetic doctrine, but has been content with her mission as the infallible teacher of faith and morals. As such a teacher her influence upon the practice of the arts was enormous while that teaching was accepted, but for definite aesthetic teaching she has not been responsible and, indeed, there was no need for such teaching from her, for nature itself is an infallible aesthetic guide, and it was only necessary for the Church to maintain the faith and morals under the influence of which men might work. In effect she says: “Look after goodness and truth, and beauty will take care of itself.”

(2) In discussing the Church as artist it is necessary to distinguish clearly between those things which she has really herself physically made and preserved and those things for the making of which she was only indirectly responsible. It cannot be too clearly remembered that there is a ‘language’ of the Church which is her own, timeless as herself and of her making, and which is to be distinguished from

the artistic products of different ages which she tolerates and even approves in their place—for example, the daily Divine Office as contrasted with ‘devotions’, and Plainchant as contrasted with the music of Palestrina. The latter category includes only those artistic products allowed by the Church to be used in her worship. It does not include such products as she has condemned as unsuitable, although remissness or ignorance may account for their presence at some times and in some places.

The liturgy of Catholic worship is a thing which the Church has made. The ecclesiastical buildings, however much she has influenced their form, are things she has bought. The Church is a consumer of church buildings; she is not a consumer of the liturgy: she is the producer of it. When we are discussing what the Church has done as herself an artist, we must, therefore, put aside all those matters in which she has been simply an organizer and employer—though a good organizer and an inspiring employer—and consider only those things of which she has been herself the maker.

Only those who are themselves Catholics can, as a rule, appreciate the contribution made by the Catholic Church to the art of the world, and even they only partially. And in these days appreciation is necessarily rare even among the Faithful, for the whole modern world, enamoured of materialism and individualism, has divorced itself from Catholic faith and morals, and has, therefore, lost the habit of mind necessary for the understanding and appreciation of an art

essentially both spiritual and sensible and also anonymous, and in its love of anecdotal sentimentality sees no beauty in the epic and intellectual art of the Church.

The visible Church of Christ is herself a supreme work of art, and has made a thing of beauty of the whole life of man wherever she has been victorious. In the lesser matters—in her liturgy, her music (the ecclesiastical chant), her ritual—she is even now the only artist worth considering. Where else shall we find any power to make or preserve formal speech or writing? Where else shall we find any sense of the value of formal movement or dress? And, in music, where else shall we find, as we find in the chant of the Church, the perfect combination of musical sound and rhythm with worthy place and occasion? The majority of Catholic churches are, for reasons we shall examine later, only less banal in their artistic exhibitions than the secular halls and houses by which they are surrounded, yet the Church is in fact the maker and preserver of a liturgy, ritual and music which, in spite of unskilful or unworthy exponents, are of supreme beauty and of supreme importance to the world.

I have said that as a rule only those who are themselves Catholics can appreciate the art of the Church, and this is necessarily so, for the non-Catholic generally sees the Church simply in the buildings which she uses and in what seems to him to be a combination of semi-barbarous taboos with a wholly barbarous emotionalism. He thinks of the Church as an organization which forbids divorce and drugs

its devotees with incense, which forbids the eating of meat on Fridays and wallows in theatrical music on Sundays, which hates scientific examination and loves thaumaturgy. With the real Church he has no acquaintance whatever, and the Protestant history upon which he has been reared has not only filled his mind with falsehood but poisoned it.

(3) The Catholic Church is primarily a teaching body, and the command, 'Go ye and teach all nations' is the occasion and the cause of her activity. In discussing therefore what the influence of the Church is or has been upon the art of the world we have to consider two things: (a) what that influence has been in those times when her teaching was accepted and therefore acted upon and, (b) what it is to-day, when her teaching is generally neglected or opposed, and when the activity of the world shows only the dregs of christian influence. In a treatise on sexual morals, for example, it would be necessary to distinguish between the practice of the people in a time when the Church's teaching upon marriage was accepted and the practice to-day, when that teaching is neglected and opposed, but when at the same time the existing marriage law owes what little firmness it has to the ancient law of the Church.

(a) The influence of the Church as buyer and user of works of art was of course enormous. Nevertheless it is a mistake to suppose that that influence was employed in any way differently from that of any other consumer of goods. The Church bought what she needed from those best able to supply it—whether buildings, paintings, carvings, writings,

fabrics or anything else. But though a large and constant buyer is sure to wield a powerful influence, the character of the goods supplied, their quality and beauty, is not affected by purchasing power, but corresponds with the character of the producer. The thing called beauty is not obtained by dangling money in front of the workman, nor is it possible thus to get even good service. The supply of those things is dependent upon the existence of certain religious conceptions—conceptions consciously or unconsciously accepted by the individual workman or by the whole people. When they are accepted by individuals only, when a religious conception of the nature and object of work is found only here and there and in exceptionally gifted persons, as is the case to-day, you get a more or less eccentric art and craft depending for its appreciation, and consequently for its support, upon similarly exceptional buyers. Upon the other hand, when religious conceptions are widely distributed and enthusiastically received by a whole nation or group of nations, as in mediaeval Europe, you get a traditional or hieratic art and craft independent of the support of exceptional persons and receiving appreciation and understanding from the whole people. And in such circumstances the summit of achievement attained far surpasses the highest attainments of individualistic art, for it is a racial expression and the expression of an age; and the tragedy and humour of the individual human touch, though not lost nor even hidden, are enriched and exalted by the profound and impersonal quality of Nature itself, so

that in such times man is at one with the Creator and not merely his critic, pro or con, nor merely the purveyor of his own fancies, little or great.

At various times and in various places a religious conception of the universe has been widely and enthusiastically accepted and acted upon. Such a period and place was the middle-age and Europe, and the Catholic faith informed and inspired the whole life and work of many nations. We are not at the moment concerned with similar phenomena occurring under the aegis of other faiths. Here we are concerned only with the fact that in a certain time and place a certain faith was generally accepted and was the main-spring of action, and that under such circumstances the Church, as consumer, was only able, whatever she might have wished or whatever her ministers might have wished, to buy and to use a certain kind of product, a product redolent of the Faith indeed and of the social institutions of the time (social institutions for which she herself was responsible or of which she was at least not intolerant), but a product, nevertheless, for the form and quality of which she was only indirectly responsible. Although, for instance, it is not possible to say that the institution of slavery was deliberately and statedly destroyed by the Church, it is certain that the Church was impatient of that institution, and found it incompatible with the full and logical implications of her teaching. Nevertheless, it is entirely wrong to say, as is often said, that the Church, as such, was the inventor of the styles of building and craftsmanship which

flourished in mediaeval Europe. She was responsible for the general tenor of the age and for the fundamental ideas inspiring the people, rich and poor, learned and simple, but apart from her own work as artist, of which we have already written, she was simply 'the best customer,' and bought and used the work of the time as lavishly, as indiscriminately and as uncritically as she does to-day. She was, and is, the best customer because she is the kind of institution which must be that. Her kingdom is not of this world, and therefore she is not primarily concerned with ephemeral and particular and relative things, but with the eternal, the general and the absolute.

(b) But the Church is not responsible for mediaeval architecture or any other mediaeval art. She was responsible for maintaining the ideas and the attitude of mind in which alone any great art is possible. She was responsible then, in mediaeval Europe, as other religious institutions have been in other times and places, and the same ideas and the same attitude of mind are necessary even where the Church is unknown or where her influence is neglected. The individual artist, in whatever time and place, is necessarily moved by the same powers of the spirit. The only difference between the artist of mediaeval Europe and him of our own time is this: that the former was one among a million fellows and lived in a time when the whole population shared the same view of the fundamental vanity of temporal things as compared with eternal, whereas the artist of to-day has but a few thousand fellows, and they

mostly engaged in the pursuit of the merely ephemeral, and he lives in a time when the whole people is convinced of the supreme importance of getting and spending. It is an enormous and far-reaching difference. Artists to-day are as impotent as was the factory system then. To-day we do not expect an ordinary workman to have any aesthetic initiative. We expect him to be servile and legislate to keep him so. Formerly aesthetic initiative was the common possession, servility was derided, and the whole strength of workmen's organizations was used to build defences against slavery and the tyranny of commercial enterprise. They failed, the Church failed, freedom hardly won gave place to slavery newly dressed. Truth divinely revealed gave place to opinion changing from day to day. The Church which could then buy the willing and understanding service of men is now, whether she would or no, the purchaser of the servile and unintelligent product of the factory and of the building contractor. She is still the best customer—buying lavishly and uncritically. Her mission is not to coerce nations to conform to this or that social system. Her mission is to preserve the creed and her own art, to convert the one and the many, to preach Christ crucified and the life of the world to come.

So it is, and so it will always be, and if the architecture and furnishing of churches is to-day banal, it is because banal is the civilization built upon commercial enterprise and banal is everything not strictly utilitarian which such a civilization can produce.

The Forth Bridge is magnificent because it is a work of intelligence strictly applied to an object of utility. Modern ecclesiastical statuary is ridiculous and even nauseating because it is produced merely to supply a market in which the buyers, like the sellers and their employees, are, after three centuries of heresy and schism and a century of factory industrialism, deprived of any standards whereby to judge such things; whereas in the case of objects of utility, like the Forth Bridge or a bicycle, the tests are numerous and easy—if such break, under ordinary usage, they are no good and that is all about it.

It may be urged that those who have the responsibility for erecting and furnishing ecclesiastical buildings, especially if they are members of a body which is itself, in its collective capacity, a supreme artist, might be expected to maintain and to appreciate a higher standard of things than is usually found in Catholic churches to-day; their membership of the Church should force upon them a more enlightened view. The Church, which has the spending of so much money, might at least employ the best artists, even if they be few and eccentric. Her pictures and statues and extra-liturgical music might be made by artists rather than by commercial firms of church-decorators, even if she be obliged to employ architects and contractors to do her buildings. Why, it is asked, are so many painters competing for customers on the walls of the Royal Academy exhibitions, or why are the younger men so often obliged to sell themselves to advertisement con-

tractors or else to live in penury? We will examine briefly the history of the matter; then we shall see more clearly the causes underlying the present evil state of affairs.

At the break-up of the mediaeval system two great disruptions were acting and inter-acting—the Reformation and the Renaissance. At the beginning of the fifteenth century the class of persons now called artists did not exist, nor was there such a thing as an architect's profession. There were simply various grades of workmen, skilled and less skilled, well known and honoured, or unknown and unhonoured. But the present distinction of classes among workmen was entirely undeveloped.

The modern distinction between the working classes, the middle classes and the upper classes was not to be found. There was a thing very different—different in its origins and in its effects. There was distinction of functions. There was no such thing as the gentleman as such or so called. The King was honoured as king, the Bishop as bishop, the Farmer as farmer, the Knight as military leader, the Mason as worker in stone, the Merchant as collector and distributor of goods, the Money-lender as Jew, but no one was honoured simply as gentleman or dishonoured as merely workman. It is unnecessary here to develop a treatise upon the social institutions and ideals of the middle-age. What is necessary is to show the effect of the loss of the Catholic mediaeval idea of functional distinction, as opposed to class distinction, upon the practice of the arts. And yet it must not be supposed that the

idea of that time is something peculiarly either Catholic or mediaeval. It would be truer to say that it is simply humanly normal; that it was fostered by the Church rather than invented by her; that its almost complete victory was lost on account of sin and pestilence rather than by the uprising of other and equally good and normal things.

As far as the arts were concerned, assuming the possibility of isolating them, the most obvious cause of change was the inability of workmen's organizations to cope with the rise of the power of merchantmen both inside and outside their body. Foreign trade on the one hand, and the growth of the mere shop on the other, upset the balance of power. Work which in the first place had sometimes been done by clerics with their own hands and later by guilds of stoneworkers fostered and employed by the Church now became procurable in shops. You could buy an altar over the counter, so to say, whereas formerly you must go direct to the stone-mason or carver. At first, of course, there was but little difference. The shop and the workshop were often run by the same people. The shopman sold his own manufactures.

But the tendency under the circumstances, with the contemporary development of trade in general, was for the shop and the workshop to become more and more divorced, and though there was no artist or architect of superior class as yet—you bought works of art as you now buy bread—the gradual effect of this process was the degradation of things made. The prestige of the craftsman

in consequence was lowered. He could no longer claim the high esteem he had formerly enjoyed. He was now more and more the mere employee, and discerning buyers—kings, princes and governors—naturally became more and more enamoured of the newly discovered glories of the ancient world and inclined to encourage the tendency of persons of their own rank to become producers of works of art. This tendency was accelerated, because the old-time workmen had not the literary culture required for the production of work in any but the traditional style, so that it became increasingly necessary to employ men of literary and academic education. But such persons not having been brought up at the bench, not being themselves accustomed to work with their hands, are naturally designers and critics rather than craftsmen. Hence the divorce of the designer from executant with which we are now familiar, and which we now think (how erroneously!) to be normal. But it was inevitable that the cultured designer should be a comparatively rare person, and his employment comparatively expensive. The shop would still necessarily be called upon to supply the great bulk of things required. And yet, as we see, the shop has become more and more degraded as it has become more and more purely commercial, that is, as it has become more and more true to its own nature—that of a place where things are sold for the profit of the proprietor. The object of a workshop is to produce things, that of a shop to sell them.

The modern ecclesiastical furnishing shop is the direct descendant of the shop of the late middle ages. Nothing is different but the quality of the goods, and they, already inferior at the date of the Reformation, are now degraded beyond redemption.

Meanwhile and elsewhere an entirely different sort of art has arisen owing no allegiance to the traditional art of pre-Reformation times and having no roots in christian thought and practice—less or not at all degraded by commercialism but vitiated instead by all the intellectual pride and vanity of which the materialism and infidelity of the modern world is full. The ecclesiastic who is responsible for the purchase of buildings and furniture is therefore in an obviously difficult position. In the shop he may buy what he needs and at a price he can afford. From the independent artist he cannot generally get what he needs without either converting him to the Faith or submitting to the imposition of a non-Catholic or an anti-Catholic treatment of the thing, building or picture or whatever it may be, that he needs and at the same time paying a price beyond his purse. The artist complains that the ecclesiastic will not pay a price sufficient for good work, and this is generally true. Things are produced in bulk by commercial firms at a price below that at which good work can be done. But, on the other hand, the artist has often a very inflated notion of the money value of his work, as he has of his own personal importance. And, above all, quite apart from its insistently idiosyncratic quality, a quality in any

case undesirable and distracting and annoying, especially in a Catholic church where God and not Mr So-and-so the artist is the object of worship, his work when done is generally the wrong kind of work. It is not merely that it is not anonymous, but that it is not either furniture or decoration. It is essentially museum work, essays in criticism; it is not what the Church needs, even when it is good.

And the so-called artist-craftsman, though he does often set out to supply the needs of the Church, is affected by the same things as the artist. In his case it is not so much a question of price. His work may be too expensive, but he can make a better case for his charges than the painters and sculptors who may in practice be thus distinguished from other artists. The artist-craftsman is also, as a rule, intellectually snobbish and generally an infidel: with him no appetite is so urgent as the appetite for social justice, whereas among many engaged in the figurative arts, though they be not Catholics, there is inevitably, from the nature of their work, an appetite for ultimate truth and for an answer to the fundamental questions of why and whither.

Therefore, though we may admit that the work exhibited in modern Catholic churches and among Catholics generally is deplorable, and incidentally the worst possible propaganda, yet it is also necessary to admit that such a state of affairs is the inevitable result of a world-wide decay in faith, and that no radical remedy is to be found in, even though no harm would be done by, the aesthetic education of ecclesiastics. The only radical remedy is the

conversion of the world to the Faith and the consequent destruction of modern materialism and commercialism. For the Church, far from being the cause of modern materialism, is the only force ultimately capable of fighting it. But that fight, like the fight against chattel slavery, will not be by deliberate and stated attack on modern evil institutions, though many individual Catholics will make such attack, but by the preaching of doctrine such as tends to make the modern world impossible.

The question, What has the Church done for Art? is therefore answered thus:

AS TEACHER she has inculcated a philosophy, a standard of eternal values which, when widely accepted, produced both in herself and in the world an artistic achievement equal to any in human history.

AS ARTIST she has made and presented a liturgy, a ritual, a literature, and a music, corresponding with her mind. Above all, she gave, though the fact is now for a time eclipsed, a splendid order to the whole life of christian peoples, and this was the greatest work of art of all.

AS BUYER and user of works of art, she was and is the best customer of the artist, for not only has she, by her ministers, been universally lavish and indiscriminating, but she has, though neither prince nor robber, preserved for artists even to our own time a constant source of employment such as princes supply only when they are not spending their money on armaments and such as ordinary men can supply only when they have robbed their fellows.

WHAT, ACCORDING TO THE CATHOLIC CONCEPTION, IS THE RELATION OF ART TO LIFE?

IT has been said¹, and it is Catholic doctrine, that man is a bridge connecting the material and the spiritual. Both are real, both are good. God is spirit; man is matter and spirit. Man is therefore able to see, to present in material terms things spiritual and, conversely, though he cannot represent it, he is able to comprehend, though not fully, the spiritual significance of the material. He can show the spiritual in terms of matter, but he cannot show the material in terms of spirit.

The art of man, though ultimately unimportant, for, like all material things, works of art will return to dust, has therefore two claims to attention. In the first place, it is the only activity of which man is capable which is in itself worth pursuing, and, in the second, it is man's sole abiding solace in this vale of tears. In this age, an age noted for every sort of material achievement, these are very controversial statements. Let us proceed to their demonstration.

The essence of religion is the affirmation of absolute values. Religions may be good or bad, values may be true or false, but the affirmation of an absolute value is a religious affirmation. Without such affirmations there

¹ Cf. Nietzsche: "What is great in man is that he is a bridge and not a goal, a bridge leading from animal to beyond man." But Nietzsche meant a sort of moving platform and taught no proper doctrine of the nature of man.

would be sciences, moralities, and—Royal Academies of Art: but there would be no religion. To affirm that *such* and *such* is true because it is true and for no other reason, and that *such* and *such* is good because it is good and for no other reason, are religious affirmations. And, in the same way, to say that *such* and *such* is beautiful because it is beautiful and for no other reason is a religious affirmation. In this way it is clear how art, like philosophy and morals, may be a part of religious phenomena, for as justice is truth in practice and prudence is goodness in practice, art is simply the beautiful in practice.

It is understood that the Philosopher is one who has for his object the discovery of truth. A work of philosophy may be a work of art, but it not so called because beauty is but incidental to it and is not considered by the philosopher, *qua* philosopher, though it may be by the speaker or the writer or the printer.

It is understood that the Man of Prudence is one who has for his object the doing of good deeds. A good deed may be a work of art, but it is not so called because beauty is but incidental to it, and is not considered by the doer as *such*.

It is to be understood that an Artist is one who has for his object the making of things as well as they can be made. A work of art must be both true and good, but it is not called *such*, for truth and goodness, though essential to it, are not the motive of the artist, *qua* artist, though they may be that of the artist *qua* man or *qua* workman.

The christian philosopher is concerned to discover that order in things which both reason and revelation show him to be true. The moralist is concerned to live according to that order in things which both revelation and reason show him to be good. The artist is concerned to display that order in things which sense and sensibility show him to be both right and good¹. What is a right order of numbers? What is a good order? What is an order which is both good and right? Reason and Revelation shows us the true or the good, but that quality in things which proclaims them both right and good at once is not perceived by reason nor declared in revelation. It is known by the soul immediately. The knowledge is not attained by ratiocination, and is impatient of expression in words. It is known by the soul because it is in function of the soul that it exists. The faculties of the soul are the intelligence and the will. The object of the intelligence is the true, that of the will is the good; but the beautiful is the object of both the will and the intelligence.

By intuition truth may be perceived and by reason the knowledge may be developed. By intuition goodness may be perceived and by reason the knowledge of it developed. The beautiful also is perceived by intuition but the knowledge of it is developed by contemplation.

The power of intuition by which we distinguish the good and the bad is commonly called the conscience, and

¹ As the true act is called just, so the true thing is called right; e.g. "a right line."

the word is technically applied to the perception of the moral order. But it is not necessarily so confined, and may well be used to connote the perception of the distinction of true and false and of beautiful and ugly. This application is useful, for it enables us to collate the progress of the development of the soul's knowledge in all the three categories. We speak of the development of conscience and thereby generally mean the development of the moral sense. We may well mean also the development of the sense of truth and of the sense of beauty. In fact, the conscientious man is not only he who considers why he acts, but he also who considers what it is he does and in what manner. By the practice of thinking critically the conscience and knowledge of truth are developed. By the practice of doing critically the conscience and knowledge of goodness are developed, and by the practice of making critically the conscience and knowledge of beauty are developed.

Now any theory of aesthetic must necessarily include in its scope every possible artistic activity—the dance no less than the song; the South Sea canoe painting no less than the painting of portraits or of icons; the bridge no less than the cathedral; the cashbox no less than the monsternce; and the moulding of human society no less than the modelling of clay. And not only must the theory include all possible art, but the mind of the theorist and of his reader must be inclusive. There is a kind of priggishness in many aesthetic theories which damns them. There is a tendency to make a scheme which will include only those

things advertised as art and exclude things which do not happen to have received the adulation of writers and tourists. And the reader also is commonly a prig in this matter, and tests every theory of art by reference to such a thing as (e.g.) Millais's 'Bubbles,' thus confusing himself hopelessly; for the value of such a painting is not primarily artistic, but sentimental, and it is rather a test of moral than of aesthetic values.

The difficulty is the result of two fundamental misunderstandings, namely, first, that a work of art is always a representation, an imitation of something seen or heard in nature, and that the function of the artist is to purvey such; and, second, that the beautiful is that which represents the good. The beautiful is indeed good, but not in function of representation. So accustomed have people become to thinking that the representation of the good is the essence of beauty, and that the imitation of nature is the essential business of the artist, that works of art which rely neither upon ethical charm nor upon verisimilitude have no value for them. The Sistine Madonna is hailed as a supreme work of art: the ancient painting of the Chinese simply as a monument to barbarism. The decadent sculpture of the Greeks is praised without stint; the domestic iron work in the South Kensington Museum is regarded as a collection of curios. The president of the Royal Academy of Arts is feasted annually; a Lancashire weaver may die in the workhouse and be belauded only if he never went 'on strike.' Let us take these misunderstandings in order.

1. That a Work of Art is essentially an imitation of something in Nature.

UPON the contrary, a work of art is essentially an original creation.

Because man exists in the natural world everything he does must conform to natural law. Because he is surrounded by Nature, the material apprehended by his senses is natural material. Nature and the natural world are therefore the stuff of his work and play. It does not follow that therefore all work and play is bound to be in imitation of natural things. It only follows that all work and play is bound to obey natural law. The primrose has a certain kind of yellow colour. It does not follow that everything made in that colour is bound to be made in imitation of the primrose. The full moon is apparently round. It does not follow that all round things are made in imitation of the moon. What does follow is this: that without Nature we should not know colour or shape, and that being in Nature we can only use the colour and shape of natural things. How we choose to use them is the question. And the fact that we can choose is the important point. But Nature is more than merely the stuff of man's makings. She is also his guide, and is infallible as is the Church; by reason of her inerrancy, she cannot lead man wrong. What is called 'copying Nature' in modern art is, in fact, not the copying of Nature at all; it is simply the registration, in whatever medium, of the view of the registrar. A landscape painter or a portrait painter does not copy Nature; he registers his

view of a landscape or person and, were his memory strong enough, he could do it at home. If he is not merely registering his view, if he is re-arranging the things seen to satisfy his own sense of what is good and right arrangement, then he is the thing called artist. The truth is that the intelligence is informed by memory and uses the information. But the shape given to things and actions is subject to the human power of choice, to man's free will. Man by his free will is capable of original creation, and a work of art is such by reason of its original form.

Nature is an infallible guide because she is the work of God himself and, for the workman, truth to Nature is not tested by photography or the gramophone but, as it is for the engineer, by understanding of and correspondence with natural law¹.

This understanding and correspondence is not found in the work of the modern school of imitative painters or makers of 'programme' music, but in the folk-song and peasant art of all times and places, and in the developed art of ancient races, such as the Chinese and Assyrians, in the art of twelfth-century Europe, and, even in our own time, in the traditional chant of, for example, the Carthusians and Benedictines, in which you have, in fact, nothing self-conscious or critical, but man and God, Nature and art at one.

¹ *Ars imitatur naturam in sua operatione.* 'Art imitates nature by working as she works' (St Thomas Aquinas, 'Summ. Theol.').

The imitation of Nature is always popular, but this popularity is due to the psychology of man. The pleasure derived through imitation and mimicry exists in function of man's brain rather than of his soul. The popularity of the sensuous and the imitative is readily understood and is in itself good. But the artist has continually to beware of it, and to remember that it is in the measure that a people has lost religion that it demands likeness to Nature. Portrait painting¹ hardly existed before the fifteenth century. Such sculpture as that of Chartres could not be produced to-day. Man's worship of God has given place to man's worship of himself.

2. That the Beautiful is that which represents the Good. That the Beautiful in Art is that which represents the Good in Nature. That the Beautiful in Nature is that with which man associates Good. That the Beautiful is always a representation, and is beautiful in function of the loveliness of the thing represented.

UPON the contrary: beauty is independent of representation and of ethical association, and a beautiful thing is such in function of its own nature. The

¹ Compare the great seals of Henry IV and Henry V with those of Edward VII and George V. The first two are identical but for names and dates and are very admirable emblems of kingship; the last two are, of course, supposed to represent King Edward and King George, and are remarkably bad seals though photographically accurate as portraits.

beauty of a portrait painting is independent of the beauty of its subject. A spider is not ugly because man does not find him either pleasant or useful. An oak leaf is beautiful, but not because man associates it with good, still less because it is like any other thing on earth; it is beautiful on its own account.

Pre-Renaissance art is not, as many solemnly declare, unimportant because verisimilitude (truth to appearance) was not achieved by primitive artists. The gargoyles on the cathedral of Notre Dame at Paris are not without beauty because, in so far as they represent anything at all, they represent devils. Neither the camera nor the textbook of moral theology are the test of beauty. A work of art is not to be judged beautiful in the degree of its likeness to anything, nor in the degree of its likeness to something lovable, nor, supposing we deem a woman to be more lovable than a spider, is a portrait of a woman to be judged to be more beautiful than a portrait of a spider. Conversely ugliness in a work of art is not measured by the degree in which the work departs from natural appearance, nor is a work of art necessarily ugly¹ because it is like nothing lovable.

These misunderstandings are variously felt by different persons and different kinds of work suffer in different ways. Thus painting suffers most, music perhaps least.

¹ We use the word 'ugly' as signifying the exact opposite of 'beautiful' (i.e. privation of beauty) though colloquially it may mean merely clumsy or uncouth.

Most people can appreciate a tune for its own sake, or even a symphony, and do not insist that it shall imitate any natural noise. Few people can see painting in the same way and appreciate form and colour as such, but insist upon imitation and ethical standards, forgetting that neither imitation nor the inculcation of morals is the artist's business. The musician does not write the poem to which he may be asked to make appropriate music. Nor does the painter write the Gospel history to which he may be required to give appropriate shape and colour. And as the musician may invent melodies which are in themselves good and right without reference to any literature, so may a painter invent melody and harmony in his own material.

That there is beauty which is independent of human love is, of course, a statement which many declare false, and a whole school of modern philosophers and many ancient ones have built their systems upon the denial of absolutes. Such is not the Catholic philosophy. But, it is said, though there be absolute truth and absolute goodness there need not be absolute beauty. Surely beauty at least is a purely relative term. If beauty be defined as that which represents the lovable, then, of course, beauty is merely relative to man's affections. But if we discover a quality in things which is not their goodness and is not their truth, a quality found in innumerable things known to be unlovable, which, though lovable indeed, is not itself lovable, what shall we call this quality? Common to the lily and the gorilla, to the rainbow and the spider, to the village

dance and the tragedy of Macbeth, to the Kaffir's kettle and the Portland vase, a thing ineffable and having no degrees, it is the splendour of Being and is called beauty. That which is true relatively to man's experience is relatively true. That which is true relatively to God's knowledge is absolutely true. That which is good relatively to man's need is relatively good. That which is good relatively to God's will is absolutely good. That which is beautiful relatively to man's love of it is relatively beautiful (more strictly called lovely). That which is beautiful relatively to God's love of it is beautiful absolutely.

Therefore the sole test of absolute values is God, and this is of necessity, for God is in fact and by definition the only absolute being.

I may now approach the general question: What is the relation of art to life according to the Catholic conception of it? And I may also conclude the argument showing that art is the only human activity in itself worth pursuing and man's only abiding earthly solace.

These latter are, of course, dependent upon the answers to the general question, for it is only upon the acceptance of the rightness of such and such relationships that we may deem such and such to be supremely worth while.

The Church has nowhere said such and such is the relation of art to life. She has formulated a certain creed, and acceptance of that creed necessarily involves certain conclusions. What conclusion does the creed necessarily involve in the matter of art?

The Church teaches that man is a creature of God, such that he is capable of the knowledge of God, the love of God, and the service of God, and of the beatific vision of God. Such is the nature and end of man to which, also, he can be unfaithful. What earthly pursuit is, for such a being, most worth while? We have seen that truth is the object of the intelligence, and that good is the object of the will. We have seen that the beautiful is that which the soul apprehends as having an order both right and good. Truth is in itself good. Good is in itself truth. But the beautiful is in itself both good and truth.

What, in fact, is in itself worth while?

(a) Shall I work to discover the truth of the relationships of numbers? That is not in itself worth while because their relationships are already known to God. (b) Shall I put my hand in my pocket and give a penny to a beggar? That is not in itself worth while because I could send it to him by messenger just as well. (c) Shall I make something of which it may be said that it is 'a thing well made,' that, being so seen, it gives delight to the intelligence—for what it is, not for what it signifies? That in itself is worth while; for in such activity man collaborates with God in creating.

You may not desire to make things; you may not be able to do so to your own satisfaction, but the activity is really worth while because a thing well made is an end in itself. The love of truth and the love of one's neighbour are ends in themselves, as is the love of beauty. But the

book setting forth truth is not as such an end in itself, nor is the act of charity: whereas the work of art is in itself an end. It is like a game—a thing played for its own sake.

You cannot envisage scientific research in Heaven, nor any scope for relief work among the inhabitants. But play and Heaven are obviously compatible, for in playing man knows himself to be the friend and partner of God.

The Bible, regarded simply as the literary deposit of truth, is not in itself worth while. It is a means to an end. The Resurrection of our Lord, regarded simply as a proof of his divinity, was not in itself worth while. It was the means to an end—‘our regeneration into the living hope.’

The smallest daisy in the grass is in itself worth while. It is a thing, a being in itself. It is not a means to an end. ‘It lasteth and for ever shall, for God loveth it.’

It should be clear then, that for man, who is compounded of both the sensible and the spiritual, that activity alone is in itself worth pursuing which is, like himself, both sensible and spiritual in its nature, for in such activity alone does man completely fulfil his nature, and in such alone can he find abiding solace upon earth.

That art is the sole activity in itself worth pursuing on earth is demonstrable by argument from the nature of man and his powers. That art is man’s sole abiding solace upon earth is shown by the facts of history. Many merely sensible things are consoling, but they do not abide. Many purely spiritual things are consoling, but they are not of

earth. Throughout the whole of his history man has found abiding consolation in art, for it employs and satisfies both his spiritual and his sensible nature and is an activity constantly inviting his engagement.

Therefore, although the Church has not formulated any aesthetic doctrine, a certain relation of art to life may be implicit in her teaching and explicit in her effects. She has not said art is such a thing, life is such a thing, and such is the relation between them. She defines the nature of man and, as far as may be possible, the nature of God, and she defines the relationship of man to God. In these definitions the nature of the work of the artist and its relation to life are implicit.

But it must not be supposed that the aesthetic implications of Catholicism are peculiar to it. The truth of the Church's definitions of faith and morals are peculiar to her, but neither a truly religious spirit nor the book of Nature are her exclusive possessions. Many nations and many individuals have in various times and places been imbued with a belief in absolute values, and have lived and worked under the sway of such belief. The state of affairs prevailing to-day in what are called civilized countries is really exceptional and abnormal. The excessive regard paid to things of demonstrably relative importance is quite uncommon and transitory. The soul of man demands absolute sanctions, and in the absence of divinely revealed truth he will invent revelations for himself, and will even shed his blood for his faith. The phenomenon of many divinely in-

spired arts and only one divinely inspired Church is, however, not so puzzling as it may appear, for, whereas the Church alone is divinely guided in the teaching of faith and morals, the whole world is and has always been divinely guided in its attempt to acquire understanding of beauty and the achievement of it.

The aesthetic implied in Catholic theology is not essentially different from that implied by many other religions. The fundamental is the belief that there are things good in themselves, true in themselves, and beautiful in themselves. The holding of such belief is actually equivalent to belief in God and the doctrine of God is built upon it. It is the basis of religion.

All great religions—i.e., all religions which have captured the enthusiasm of men during long periods of time—have been the inspiration of great art, for they have promoted and fostered the attitude of mind essential for the production of things of transcendental value, but in those times and places wherein religion has not been or is not the motive force, the capacity, the intelligence, the will to give more than relative value to work is the rare possession of exceptional individuals.

The attitude of mind induced by the practice of meditation upon things having no measure of value in time or place is an attitude essential to the production of works of art, and a people which during a prolonged period has been habituated to such a mental attitude, which believes it good and right, and is, in fact, in love with it, does, as an

historic fact, produce an art corresponding with its mind and, conversely, the attitude of mind induced by a wide acceptance of merely temporal and local values is barren, and, as an historic fact, a people which during a prolonged period has been habituated to such valuations does not produce anything of transcendent value (except in the case of rare individuals whose mentality is out of harmony with their time, and whose work in consequence, however good, is necessarily eccentric and idiosyncratic) and produces no art at all having more than sensual and sentimental quality.

It is to be noticed, further, that in a religious period art, as such, is scarcely talked about at all. It is taken for granted as being simply "the well doing of what needs doing." There is no artist class strutting in conscious pride of its own superior gifts and occupations. On the contrary, it is assumed that every workman is an artist, and that everyone is capable of aesthetic understanding and appreciation. It need not be said that to-day the situation is exactly reversed. Art is a great deal talked about, and the pride of the artist has become nauseating. It is taken for granted that apart from the work of artists nothing will be better done or made than is profitable to the contractor or shop-keeper, that no workman is an artist, and that the sense of beauty is the exclusive possession of a cultured few. The situation is reversed because the present time is an irreligious time, and without belief in God or gods. If we want art we must again get religion. But religion is not

to be got for the sake of art, any more than for the sake of justice or mercy, but for the sake of God.

To determine the relation of man to God is the specific function of the Church as teacher. This relation is defined in terms of faith and morals, and is not patient of dialectical expression in other terms. The relation of art to life is not explicitly defined by the Church, but is implicit in her teaching and explicit in her effects.

Art is, by definition, concerned with the beautiful. The beautiful is, by definition, that which is known to have in itself and at once an order both good and right. The beautiful is distinguished from the lovely as being an absolute quality, whereas loveliness is relative. Art is not, as such, concerned with the lovely.

But the question 'what is the relation of art to life?' is an improper one if it implies that art is an activity or a thing existing merely as a means to temporal life. It would be analogous to and as improper as the question 'what is the relation of benevolence to life or of philosophy to life?' For, though it may be true that the existence of good works and of philosophy make life on earth more endurable, as also, we may not too rashly presume, does the existence of art, yet it would be fruitless as well as improper to conceive of either the love of one's neighbour or the discovery of truth as being activities directed chiefly and of their nature to the promotion of terrestrial happiness. Such is, in fact, not their nature; nor is it the nature of art.

To make the question a proper one, the word life must be held to mean eternal life, the life of God, and the answer to the question, as implied in Catholic doctrine, is then as follows: The relation of art to life is a relation of love, for art is the sensible expression of man's love of God, as nature is the sensible expression of God's love of himself.

ESSAY
IN AID OF A GRAMMAR OF
PRACTICAL AESTHETICS

THERE are three possible qualities in a work of art. These three qualities are mimicry, literary content, and original form. Every work of art must have one or other of these three in one degree or another. By 'mimicry' I mean what is called representation, i.e. likeness to something existing in Nature. By 'literary content' I mean that in the work which expresses the story or anecdote it relates, that is to say, its literary significance apart from its significance as a representation of something. These two qualities are, I suppose, readily understood. Everybody is able to judge as to the degree of likeness to something which artists achieve in their work; also everybody is able to understand the notion that by means of representation it is possible to tell a story or express an idea. It is the third quality, which I have called 'original form,' which is the most difficult to define, and yet it is original form that is especially the artist's business, whether he be painter, poet or potter. For an artist is not so called because he has the ability, in paint, words or clay, to make things which shall resemble things seen in Nature; if it were so any kind of imitation would rightly be called a work of art, which is absurd. Neither is a man an artist because he has the ability to present in paint, words, or clay some matter of

fact or even of fiction, for were that so every spoken sentence would be a work of art, which again is absurd. It is not that a spoken sentence cannot be a work of art, nor is it that an imitation of something seen in Nature cannot be a work of art; but it is not likeness in the one case or presentation of fact in the other which makes it so. For otherwise, as we have said, all imitations and all statements would be works of art, which is absurd. The quality which makes a work of art is a quality independent of, though not necessarily divorced from, representation or literary content, and it is this quality which I have called original form.

By original form, then, I mean that quality in the thing made which owes its origin directly to the workman or artist, and is not either an imitation of something seen or an idea given to him by another person. For instance, if a man paints a picture of a bird because he has been asked to do so, the fact that his picture represents a bird is a fact for which he can claim no originality for two reasons. First of all, because somebody asked him to paint a bird, and secondly, because a bird is something he has seen and not something that he has invented.

Again, if a man be asked to paint a picture representing two cocks fighting, the picture, when done, will have the quality of mimicry in so far as the objects shown are like cocks, and in so far as their attitude suggests fighting; and it will also have literary content in so far as by means of this representation the painter has conveyed to the mind

of the spectator the facts incidental to the sport of cock-fighting.

Examples may be multiplied to any extent and be made more simple or more elaborate. For instance, a man may paint a picture of the Deluge, and in such a picture there might be a very great amount of mimicry according to the number of figures and realistic treatment of rain and so on. Such a picture would have what is called literary content in so far as it conveys to the mind of the spectator not merely the vision of rain falling and people drowning, but, by the arrangement of the people or their dress or by the expression of their faces, or by some other means, first, that the incident portrayed was that recorded in the book of Genesis, and second, the theological and moral aspects of the situation.

Mimicry knows no bounds, and literary content, whether philosophical or merely anecdotal, is also possible to an almost unlimited extent: but in neither mimicry nor literary content is there anything for which the artist or workman is himself responsible, qua artist or workman. The mimicry is necessitated by the subject given or chosen; the literary content is given or chosen by the customer who orders the picture or, if it is given or chosen by the workman, it is given or chosen by him as if he were his own customer ordering it. But the actual manner of laying on the paint, the shape or grouping of the parts, are matters for which he is responsible as a workman, and are not things given or chosen by a customer. Therefore, it is clear that there

is in every work of man this third thing which is especially the business of the workman, which is done by him at his own initiative, and which can only be done to order where the servile conditions of modern commercialism and the factory prevail.

I am not here concerned with the problems arising out of modern servile conditions: I am only concerned with the analysis of a work of art, not with the conditions under which works of art are produced.

It is necessary to make it clear that by the words 'works of art' I mean the widest possible range of objects. Any work of man may be a work of art, and when men are free (not necessarily economically free, but free in the sense of being responsible for the form and quality of the work they do) practically everything made is a work of art. That is to say that everything in such periods contains at least the one quality which I have called original form.

Not everything made has the quality of mimicry; not everything made is like something else. A chair is not generally like anything but a chair; chairs made to look like fallen trees are obviously absurd, though many people like them because they think they look well in a garden. But though almost anything may be made to look like something not itself, it is clear that this quality of mimicry is not essential. We are satisfied with chairs even if they only fulfil the one merely material object of their existence—that of supporting our bodies—and do not by their shape either imitate some other object or tell us some story.

Not everything made has the quality called literary content. Not everything tells a story, although by a figure of speech we may say that we can see a story in everything. Thus a blood-stained knife picked up on the road may tell a story, but that is only a figure of speech, for it is clear that the knife itself has not necessarily that quality called literary content.

But everything made by free workmen has the quality of original form, that is to say, it has a form for which the maker is responsible.

The matter becomes considerably more difficult, apparently, when we deal with those things which, like pictures, sculptures, poems or music, have commonly, as far as the people who buy them are concerned, the qualities of mimicry and literary content. People have ceased to regard pictures, for instance, in the same way as they regard chairs, that is, as furniture. They think of them as things having no intrinsic purpose and no quality whatever but that of being like something or telling some story; and although people are quite ready to appreciate the form of chairs and tables—that is, the original form and not merely the form determined by the use of such objects—they are quite unable to view pictures in the same dispassionate way, and are even inclined to deny that anything besides mimicry or story-telling is either possible or desirable in painting or sculpture. In music it is quite clear that neither mimicry nor literary content are regarded as essential, for except in so called ‘programme’

music there is neither. We are quite capable of appreciating a tune for its own sake, even though it be quite unlike the song of any bird or any other natural noise, and even though it have no story to tell. But in the matter of poetry, sculpture or painting we appear to be unable even to imagine what value there can be apart from representation or story-telling. Yet if we consider the works of the past, those which we are at such pains to preserve in our museums and picture galleries, we shall, if we consider them critically, see very easily that as representations they are generally inferior to the work of most modern art-school students, and as story-tellers they are outdone by any modern novelist or photographer. If they are worth preserving at all, and a modern manufacturer may well doubt it, it must be on account of some other quality, some quality independent of time and place, unless we are prepared to assert that our museums have a merely historical interest as showing the kind of things our half-civilized ancestors had to make do with. But historical sense is not of universal importance. The comparative study of religions is of little value compared with the possession of religion, and the study of past manners is unimportant compared with the possession of our own. It is interesting to know that such and such a thing was made in France in the thirteenth century (e.g. the ivory Madonna and Child in the British Museum), but it is more important to have the thing itself, wherever or whenever it was made, provided that we deem it good.

Now, apart from this historical value, the only value of the things in our museums is intrinsic. In shape or colour or arrangement there is something about them that is of God, godly. And as God reduced chaos to order, so men in past times have given the quality of order to the things they made.

The thing, then, that I have called 'original form' is essentially a matter of order, it is the 'splendor formae' of St Thomas, it is the shining out of Being, it is the thing called beauty. And to achieve it men must will it, and to will it they must be free. The free man is responsible for what he does, but for the work of the slave another is responsible. That is the whole difference between the modern workman and his counterpart of past times. The modern workman is not responsible for doing anything but what he is told. The modern industrial system needs tools, not artists, and a century of industrialism has destroyed in the workman the very memory of artistry. With this destruction it has come about that beauty has ceased to be the common quality of things made, for under the factory system, with its concomitant machine production, no man can be held responsible; and therefore to conscience, which is essential to the production of things of beauty, no appeal is made. The only thing which is considered is the satisfaction of the consumer, the buyer. Thus not only workmen but the whole world is degraded. Artists become fewer and fewer and more and more eccentric, and the appreciation of art becomes the special province of the connoisseur.

THE ENORMITIES OF MODERN RELIGIOUS ART

HOWEVER distasteful it may be, and in this country anything precise or definite is distasteful, it is necessary that first of all we should know precisely what we are talking about.

Art! What is art but simply skill? That is the root meaning of the word and no tree can afford to do without its root. The root is the thing which attaches it to the earth—through which it draws material nourishment, elemental nourishment—oxygen, hydrogen, nitrogenous salts—Mr Huxley said. What the tree develops into—what it receives from the air and from the light of the sun and what from the falling dew, all these things presuppose the existence of roots—roots in the earth. So it is with art—it is rooted in the earth and its roots are the skill of men. I say the skill of men; for it is a man's work that is called art. It is only by analogy that we speak of the skill of the spider and this is clearly so for otherwise we could speak of the skill of the crystal. The skill, then, which is the root of art is a man's skill—man, a creature having free will, a rational soul, a creature made to know, love and serve God and to do these things of his own free will. Art is therefore deliberate skill. And bad art is not therefore unskilful—it is simply skill contaminated, deprived of its proper object by foolishness or ill will.

So, if skill is the root of art, its trunk is deliberation. Art, as a notable French philosopher has said—echoing, as I understand, the schoolmen of old—“art abides entirely on the side of the mind”—a work of art is a thing which a man has made deliberately as well as he can and as well as he knows how—even bad art is that. For who will be so uncharitable as to suppose that the late Sir Thomas Brock did not make the Queen Victoria Memorial as well as he knew how? But here we must remember that a work of art is a thing—it is a thing made—it is not a deed done. A work of art is not an act of prudence. Prudence, even worldly prudence, is not concerned with things but with deeds—deeds having relation to an end in view whether it be the obtaining of worldly advantage simply or that last end—the Beatific Vision. But art is concerned with the thing, not the man—it is concerned with the end of the work.

In so far as there is opposition between art and prudence—and there is and must always be opposition between them, as there is and must always be between man and woman—though it may be and should be ‘a lover’s quarrel’—in so far as there is opposition:—for the artist, as such, it must always be the work that matters—the work that should have the victory. In this spirit it was that Michael Angelo, so the story goes, retorted to Lorenzo someone-or-other whose portrait he had been making, and who had accused him of not making a good likeness—“no, but it will be like you in a hundred years.” In this retort he spoke truly to

the part of the artist—it was the work that mattered—to make a good likeness would have been the act of a more prudent man....

So, if a work of art is a thing made with deliberate skill, what on earth is 'religious art'?

Religion I understand to have, like art, a certain root and that root is rule. Hence it still remains true to talk of going into religion. To go into religion means to go into a rule—to place one's self under a rule. But a rule implies a ruler and here is seen the wider acceptance of the word religion. Religion in the wide sense, which is also the strict sense, almost, you might say, the straight and narrow way, is the rule of the supreme ruler—that is, God. Hence the word religious means according to God—godly.

But if that is the wide and strict sense, there is also a narrow and less strict sense. In this narrower and less strict sense 'religious' means devoted to the service of God by or on behalf of God's professional ministers—the professional exponents of the rule of God—the clergy—ecclesiastics. In fact, in common parlance, the term 'religious art' means 'ecclesiastical art.' But I am seduced by the word 'religious.' I am waylaid by the fact that 'religious' does not necessarily mean 'ecclesiastical.' I am led to bewail the fact that ecclesiastics have, so to say, 'bagged' the word. It has come about that, to be religious, art must now be ecclesiastical—almost labelled as such. It must have a form and subject-matter recognizable as something which the sort of Baedeker or Dr Lunn who dwells in all our minds,

even in mine, can label as belonging to this or that accredited Church—or to this or that accredited style of church work. It must deal with something out of the Bible or hagiolog—or it must be gothic or Buddhistic or even Hindu. In this respect, and in passing, one may sympathize with Cardinal Newman who is said to have preferred what is called the classic style of church building to that called gothic. At any rate no one can say that the classic style is specially religious in the ecclesiastical sense—do they not build town halls and banks in the same manner? Whether that was in his mind or not, it may well have been that the Cardinal, being that rare thing among ecclesiastics—a man of culture, thought that there was something satisfactory about a manner of building which did not specially label itself ecclesiastical—a manner which was universal in its application—a thing catholic—a thing embracing in its sway all the habitations and workshops of men.

So then, 'religious' does not mean merely ecclesiastical really. It means anything done or made according to the rule of God and as the service of God is perfect freedom it follows that, loving God, we may do and therefore make what we like—we shall not therefore incur the blame attaching to the irreligious. In fact all art works, from tinned-tacks to temples, are possibly rightly called 'religious art.' It depends on the artist, on his use of his skill, on his deliberation and on his devotion to the rule of God. But this last is, for the artist, a thing specially applicable to the work—*recta ratio factibilium*—the right way of making things, the

way God would have them made, the way God makes things himself—"Be you," says the artist to his work, "perfect—as my heavenly father is perfect." And just as, as we are taught, the material creation is an exhibition of God's love of himself, so man, who indeed is himself a creator in, as it were, the second degree, man makes things which are an exhibition of his love of God.

That is not what they are for, it is what they are. The material creation, what we call 'nature,' was not made in order that there might be an exhibition of God's self love. It was not done as the Royal Academy does it when it gets up a memorial exhibition of the works of the late Mr Sargent—a thing done so that the world may see, and having no other object. Nature was not made so that men and angels might rejoice. Nature simply is the exhibition of God's self love. It is an accident of that exhibition that we find it matter for rejoicing or for praise. So with man's work—it is not done in order that man may exhibit his love of God, though pious persons may view it so. Such exhibition is an accidental quality in man's work—though a necessary accident, as hardness is an accident of granite, though a necessary accident. In fact, in reality, in essence man's work, the things men make, as thus categorically distinguished from the deeds men do, from man's prudential acts, the things men make are precisely on all fours, so to say, with the things God makes—with this difference—that they are possibly better. Art does indeed improve on Nature. That is precisely what it is for. The artist, whether blacksmith or crossing-sweeper

or picture painter, is God's way of carrying on material creation to a higher pitch. We are instruments through whom passes God's own creative power. The daisy in the grass is a well-made article—God knows—but it can but grow the way it does—it has no power to do otherwise. There is something else a man can do and he alone can do and that is to know what he is doing and willingly to do it—so that from the thing he makes shines out a two-fold love—that of God for himself and that of man for God.

We have become so accustomed, since that glorious attack of high fever called the Renaissance, to regard the word 'art' as being specially confined to the painting of pictures, the making of sculptures, the making of music and the writing of books—the art of cookery or of the dentist we speak of only with a sort of condescension—and, further, we have become so accustomed to thinking of art as being primarily concerned with the imitation and criticism of nature, that we have forgotten that it can be anything else. We are oblivious to the fact that we have the whole world and the whole of history against us. The little special department of art about which we make so much fuss is not only quite ephemeral, it is also quite unimportant. Man as imitator of nature is, however clever, obviously quite ridiculous. The simplest thing in nature is so stupendously better than the most skilful imitation in paint, stone, sound or word. Again, man as critic of nature, however perspicacious and sensitive, is obviously quite inadequate. Besides, however pleasing it may be, to us, to have reminders of

places we have visited or should like to visit, however amusing it may be to be able to look through a hole in the wall—a hole surrounded by a gilt frame—and see, or think we see, a landscape we love or a person we adore—however amusing, or even entrancing, such illusion-making may be, it is obvious that God can have no sort of delight in such things and hardly patience with them—but then how patient he is!

And however interesting it may be for us to see or hear what this or that person thinks of this or that, there is clearly very little fun for God in our criticisms pro or con. He says, in effect, “love me, love my dog, but don’t bother to say anything clever about it.”

But modern painting and modern any other sort of ‘art’ is little else but just illusion-making or the making of criticisms. For the modern world a picture (and it is easier to take painting than any other art) is either frankly an illusion, a thing that looks as though it were real (“hush; be still; it will move in a minute”) or it is frankly just an exposition of what Mr So-and-so the artist thinks or feels when confronted by the thing he is painting.

I am not saying at all that the production of such works is sinful or even silly. Many such works are indeed delightful and interesting and valuable to us in our capacity as citizens of “this great metropolis.” But they are to be judged primarily upon grounds of prudence. Are they occasions of sin? Do they promote good deeds? Are they harmful to the young? Do they further that enlightened

self-interest without which the L.C.C. trams cannot be expected to 'pay'?

Before this modern preoccupation with verisimilitude and criticism, art had a very different function. Art was not imitative nor was it critical in se. Both imitation and criticism were accidental. It was quite an accident (almost even in the colloquial sense of the word) that a Madonna of Cimabue happened to be like a woman of flesh and blood—if it ever were so. It was quite an accident if the prow of a South Sea island canoe happened to appear to be swathed in garlands or decorated with the heads of enemies.

Painting and carving grew on the face of the earth like any other natural thing, and man had the pleasure as well as the honour of being the instrument of that growing. Great and marvellous as have been many of the works of men, especially of great men, during the last three hundred years, yet the works of men have been nowhere near so great as those which they did when they were content to be instruments of the greatness of God. What is the work of Rodin, "that great navvying faun," for all its understanding, compared with the sculptures of Chartres? What are the paintings even of Michael Angelo compared with the paintings on the walls of the cave temples of Ajanta? These works are not the work of a man; "they are the work of ages, of nations"—that is to say, their makers are the means by which God produces an even more poignant exhibition of his infinite love of himself than can be produced through irrational nature. And that is why such things are only

rarely found in museums. They do not belong to museums. They are not sufficiently curious, nor do they sufficiently flatter man's love of himself. Such art is both more profound and more simple than the art of our vainglorious modern world. Vainglorious! Yes, we have made, as we proclaim by the voice of 'The Daily Mail' and the British Association, the conquest of nature—we have achieved a truly remarkable and quite extraordinary supremacy over the hidden powers of matter—the products of steam and electricity, not to be despised, are a patent for our prowess, but, while we have been so busy supplying ourselves with a host of convenient knick-knacks, we have pretty well lost sight of any answer to the question 'why' or 'whither' and can in our art, apart from the productions of an eccentric few, show nothing more important or profound than the sort of thing that is used to decorate the dining-rooms of Claridge's Hotel.

Our attitude in these matters is typified by that of most people who have the 'wireless.' "I got Brussels last night," a man will say. "Oh! and what did you hear?" he will be asked. "Hear," he will reply, "I don't remember." Or another man will say: "Of course I don't bother much what's on—but I like tinkering about with the thing." And, after all, such people are quite right. The wonderful thing about the 'wireless' or the telephone is not what you hear but the fact that you can hear. The average man is quite right. The absurdity of solemnly kneeling down in a drawing-room with 'earphones' on through which you listen to

someone putting up prayers at St Martin's in the Fields is too monstrous, and if some cultured people don't see the equal absurdity of 'listening-in' to the Bach Choir or the Savoy band, well, it is comforting to know that our friend the average man finds his real pleasure in "tinkering about with the thing."

I say the art of Chartres or of Ajanta is both more profound and more simple than that of our academies. It is more profound because it is a thing inspired—a thing having the Holy Ghost for its author. "The Beauty of God is the cause of the being of all that is" says Denis the Areopagite and I may say that the being of God is the cause of the beauty of all that is.

And to bring the thing nearer home and to our own time: listen to the monks of the Charterhouse when they sing. They do not profess to sing—they are not mentioned in that Baedeker of ours as being show singers. But listen. It is the most profound of all musics. It is Nature herself giving willing praise to God. It is like the sea and the winds and it is like married love—Nature and God one flesh.

And such arts are also more simple than those of our fevered time. Like the Gospel according to St Luke, their overmastering beauty is not obtained by anything but the most straightforward good sense and good will. Their use of images is like that of children—

"Neither fire light nor candle light
can ease my heart's despair."

What academician searching for a really poignant phrase would say such things?

I say such art is simple because nowhere does it go outside the common experience, the common mental experience, of mankind. It is concerned with what matters to all men and what matters most of all—things, not imitations of things—love, not criticism.

But if it is now clear what 'religious art' is, or at least what I maintain it to be, we have still to deal with the special thing meant by the modern world when it says 'religious art'—that is, the art of churches and the art which has for its subject matter the truths taught by the Churches. It must also be supposed that by the term ecclesiastical art is meant Christian ecclesiastical art and, I suppose, even more specifically, Catholic ecclesiastical art. But it is not of Catholic ecclesiastical art that I am writing; it is the enormities of that art! Enormities—that is the departures from the norm. What is the norm? We must envisage a norm before we can talk of departures.

And first let us be clear that the word normal does not at all mean usual, or customary. I do not propose to be led into that pitfall. Were I thus misled I should be forced to speak of things—such things as the stations of the cross in Westminster Cathedral, of the singing of the Benedictine monks at Quarr, of the church of St John the Evangelist on the hill of Montmartre which is built of iron and concrete, of the engravings of Mr David Jones—such things are unusual and we are not at all accustomed to them. Were an enormity

simply anything unusual, or to which we were unused, then, certainly, such things are enormous enough. But, no, it is not so simple; would that it were!

What then is the norm of Catholic ecclesiastical art? The norm of Catholic ecclesiastical art is that which is the product of people who live and work in the full and free acceptance of Catholic teaching. It is most unfortunate but it is obvious that it is quite impossible to find any such product to-day—least of all in England. Distasteful though it naturally is, we must look to the past. It is distasteful because it is a reminder that we cannot anywhere point to a people and say: “There is a christian people—a people whose life, work, manners, customs, laws, speech are redolent of the christian faith.” Modern England owes many, even countless blessings to Christianity—to the Catholic Faith. It owes as much to the present fact of Christianity as to that christian past by which the life of Europe was moulded. But it is not possible to say that England is now a christian country in the sense that modern English life and work and manners and law and speech are redolent of the Faith and are the outcome of the application of that Faith to those things. On the contrary, those things are in all cases contaminated by non-christian or anti-christian things and in many cases are a product of purely materialist considerations.

And in the matter of work with which we are here especially concerned—for art is work, even though it be work undertaken in the spirit of play—these facts are especially

clear. The work-life of modern England is almost completely dechristianized.

Man is a responsible creature. It is possible to give him praise or blame—who can seriously blame a dog much less a rabbit—still less a tree—and the fact of free will is the cause of this responsibility. Because man has free will he can do what he chooses. The power to choose is man's nature, the opportunity to choose is his birthright. And for a workman—and the majority of men are workmen—in fact in one way or another all men, except imbeciles and parasites, are workmen—for a workman it is this power of choice, with its consequent responsibility, which gives to his work the mark of man. It is a work of man because it is a work of choice. To deprive men of economic freedom may or may not be a bad thing—after all, the suffrage—so much sought after by the women recently—does not necessarily spell unlimited freedom when it is generally a case of choosing whether not to vote for the nominee of Tweedledum or not to vote for the nominee of Tweedledee. To tie a workman by the ankle may or may not be a good thing—though limiting his power of choice of the movement of his legs, it leaves his head and hands free, and for workmen that is the chief thing. But such tying is called slavery and we have abolished slavery. Mind you, the Church did not abolish it. It is quite possible to be a good christian and a slave—it is quite possible to be a good christian and a slave-master. But slavery is obviously not a condition fully compatible with christian politics and therefore, as soon as slave-owning

became economically disadvantageous to slave-owners, no doubt the Church was very glad to see it go, and even helped in the process.

But from the point of view we are considering, that of work and the workman, there is a worse thing than slavery and that is that condition in which, though fully enfranchised—free to vote against any candidate they may be good enough to send him—and not only enfranchised but unshackled—literally unshackled—having no chain about his ankles and free to go to his work when the whistle blows or even to stay in bed—that condition in which the workman has no power of choice in his work—so that he makes nothing but only does what he is told. I am not exaggerating when I say that a very large majority of the workmen of modern England are in that condition.

Freedom is not incompatible with discipline, it is only incompatible with irresponsibility. By depriving the modern workman of responsibility we have deprived him of more than freedom; we have deprived him of manhood itself—we have made him into a mere tool—a mere sensitive plant. Is it surprising no wages seem high enough? Is it surprising that the work he does has little interest for him and even less for us?

But the point here is this: that by setting up a system of production in which no workman has any responsibility for the form or quality, the intellectual quality, of what he takes part in making, we have set up a system essentially evil, the product of which cannot by any stretch of imagination

be called christian. It is evil because it is contrary to the nature of man. Its product is unchristian because Christianity did not come to destroy but to fulfil the law of nature—because the law of nature is the law of God.

To seek in modern England then for a norm of Catholic ecclesiastical art is clearly futile; we are forced to seek elsewhere. And it does not much matter where else we seek—anywhere else will do—any place to which the condition of industrialism invented by England has not spread.

But it is not so much a place or even a time that we must find. It is rather an idea. There is normal Catholic ecclesiastical art in pre-Renaissance Rome, in pre-Reformation England, in nineteenth-century Spain, in all sorts of places, and if we take painting in particular I do not doubt but that the Byzantine and Italian primitives achieve the nearest to the perfect norm of all the artists of this world. But it is the idea that matters. The normal ecclesiastical art is that which, being the product of responsible christian workmen working in a christian world, is concerned neither with the imitation of natural appearance nor with the imitation of bygone styles of art. It flourishes like flowers in summer. It is content with its own life; it is disdainful, even destructive, of any other. It is expository not critical; decorative not anecdotal; at one with all other arts so that in a normal christian civilization a church building or a bridge or a town hall or a farmhouse are all of one mind—and, in such a civilization, painting and sculpture are simply parts of the

art of building, and painters and sculptors are simply part of the gang of builders.

Such is the idea of normality, and among sculptures that thirteenth-century wooden crucifix in the Louvre is normal ecclesiastical sculpture; among paintings the Madonna of Cimabue in the National Gallery is normal; among buildings San Clemente at Rome is normal; in music plainchant is normal; among books the Bible is normal.

It now only remains to write of the enormities of "modern" ecclesiastical art. This is perhaps even more difficult, for we are surrounded by enormities, immersed in them, almost persuaded by them to be anything else but christians. . . .

Were it not for the fact that more than nine-tenths of the Catholics of modern England are factory hands and live in suburbs, there is no doubt but that modern ecclesiastical art would drive them into atheism; it makes godliness out to be so awful. The man at the door of Westminster Cathedral said to me once: "They'll never fill the cathedral until they bring back Gounod." I dare say he was wrong; but he voiced a popular view. Most modern people are quite content with modern ecclesiastical art; it does represent what they take to be the proper thing for churches and that is no doubt why they act on the assumption that Christianity is not the proper thing for business or manufacture.

Nevertheless I must not be supposed to mean that I would prefer the comparative decency of High Church culture. The Catholic Church is not a cultured clique—that may, at

any rate, be proudly boasted of her. Infinitely preferable to the Cowley Fathers' church at Oxford is any low-brow slum Catholic church in Liverpool and, after all, the Ecclesiastical Furnishers, degraded though they are, are at any rate the lineal descendants of the pre-industrial tradition—they are bad because they have got bad—badder and badder—not because they started bad—and so they still retain certain goodnesses of a negative sort; they aren't high-brow; they aren't 'artistic' in the South Kensington art-school sense; but they're just cheap and vulgar and thoroughly sentimental and commercial. And while the world we live in is also all those things, the Catholic priest and his flock do quite right to patronize them. Heaven forbid that the priesthood should come to be considered a cultured profession. It is only by a happy accident that a priest is a man of culture. For just as we deposit our money with our banker and get him to manage our current account and are very obedient, even subservient, to him when we have no balance to speak of, and give him credit for almost unlimited wisdom in matters of finance but expect no sort of understanding from him in anything else; so we may, with much greater confidence, deposit all that concerns our faith and morals in the hands of our parish priest nor deem it a hardship because he takes no sort of interest in art—is even rather frightened of it as being a danger—a danger as being unnecessary to Salvation and likely to seduce us from things that are necessary.

Apart from the ordinary productions of the ecclesiastical furnishing shop there is another kind of enormity which I

may call the sham antique. I once heard a merchant of this class of goods say: "I believe old masters can be made to pay," and what the Medici Society does for suburbia in general this kind of church furniture shop does for churches. They supply reproductions of Botticelli or Della Robbia. They are enormously proud of this, and a certain kind of cultured person aids and abets them. They say, very justly: "How bad the ordinary ecclesiastical statue is," and then they go on: "What a pity, now that reproductions of old masters are so cheap, people don't have them in churches." This sounds plausible enough and many people are taken in by it. Nevertheless, the argument is entirely specious. It is, in fact, not better to have reproductions of old masters than bad modern things. Surely this needs no argument. . . . We are all so many sweethearts to God. Are we going to fob him off with borrowed kisses—with even the best Elizabethan love songs? Would he not rather have the vulgar endearments which are our own? And if we feel that that is just the trouble—that the ordinary church furniture shop provides love-tokens which are vile and in no sense our own—still the remedy is not the 'old master'—the remedy is 'going without,' and singing canticles to God in our hearts.

It goes without saying that another enormity, and one much older than this modern 'old master' fashion, is the sham gothic and sham classic business. That the nineteenth century with its intense appetite for every kind of material progress should, in its cups, so to say, get maudlin over

mediaeval architecture or 'the glory that was Greece' is so amazing, so comic and at the same time so foul, that it is difficult to express its full enormity. I will not attempt to do so.

Nor will I attempt to suggest remedies. That is not any part of my business here. I can only conclude with the expression of a pious hope that a sort of 'Cistercian reform' may be inaugurated and that just as in secular architecture there is a laudable tendency for architects to eschew all ornament and sculpture—because such things are not really compatible with modern methods of building—so in ecclesiastical architecture and furnishing we may live to see plain bricks and mortar and concrete—with wooden crosses for stations and only such paintings and sculpture as responsible artists can be found to make.

THE CRITERION IN ART

“Quel est donc le caractère essentiel de l'art pris dans toute sa généralité? C'est de diriger une œuvre à faire, en sorte qu'elle soit fabriquée, façonnée ou disposée comme elle doit l'être, et d'assurer ainsi la perfection ou la bonté, non pas de l'homme qui agit, mais de la chose elle-même ou de l'ouvrage fait par l'homme. C'est ainsi que l'art appartient à l'ordre pratique: en réglant une œuvre à produire, non par rapport à l'usage que nous devons faire de notre libre arbitre, mais par rapport à la manière dont l'œuvre comme telle et en elle-même doit être exécutée. Disons que l'art concerne ce qui est à faire.”

“...des beaux-arts (dont l'objet, la beauté, est lui-même universel et immatériel)...”

THE quotations with which I head this essay are from ‘The Elements of Philosophy,’ by Jacques Maritain.

M. Maritain is an accredited philosopher. The practice to which I shall draw attention is that of common men, workmen who make things, and to that of those less common men, especially called artists, who make things of which beauty is the consciously known object. For all men who make things are artists, but in these latter days, since industrialism, the child of commercial insubordination, overwhelmed us, the name has come to be regarded as only properly belonging to those who pursue the ‘fine’

arts.¹ This is inevitable, for only in the fine arts do we still preserve the notion that art is man's work—work done as a man thinks it ought to be done—in all other departments of making we have done away with human responsibility. We have set up a system in which a man is simply 'something in the city,' in which he is simply 'in business,' in which he is just 'a hand,' an employee, and no one knows or cares what his business is or what he is employed at.

The confusion of mind resulting from this state of affairs is obvious and excusable. In the one case, the notion of art as making in general has been obliterated; in the other, the notion of man and his self-revelation has been exaggerated. We no longer think of a boot as a work of art—a thing made well or ill by a man; there is no possibility of holding any man responsible for the telephone apparatus which adorns our writing-table. But, on the other hand, we are so very much aware of the personality of the man who paints on canvas representations or abstractions of landscape that many writers and critics suppose that the very being of art simply is self-expression, and that the criterion by which to judge it is the moral character, noble or otherwise, thus expressed. This is a great error. Such a theory is not in accord with the philosophy of the

¹ The French have, as usual, the advantage of us English in the matter of nomenclature. *Beaux-arts* is a more exact term than "fine arts." Saying *beaux-arts*, they know at once what they are talking about, but "fine arts" might mean anything.

matter, and the tendency of such theorizing is to lead us still further from commonsense and normality.

It is, of course, obviously true that in any work for which a man can be held responsible as its maker—responsible for its shape and quality—there is inevitably self-expression. How could it be otherwise? There is no act of man but reveals the actor; no work of man but bears the imprint of its maker. Not the tone of voice only, but the very words we use reveal us—and “the style is the man himself.” Nevertheless, it is an error to deduce that therefore self-revelation is the object of art, and this mistake would never be made were it not that writers on art, born and bred in an industrial civilization as they must now be, take the word ‘art’ to connote simply the ‘fine’ arts. The ordinary productions of men have been so denuded of humanity as to be no longer works of art at all; they are no longer works of deliberate skill; they are no longer things made as the man doing the work thinks they ought to be made. Art is now the exclusive domain of picture-makers, sculptors, poets, and musicians—there is now no art but fine-art. And the inhumanity of ordinary things has made the work of these fine-artists particularly notable for its humanity. The factory article reeks of the machine, the painting and sculpture reek of the man. We expect nothing from the commercial thing but its serviceableness; we place an exaggerated value upon the self-expression of the ‘work of art.’ The objective nature of a work of art, its own being, is forgotten. We ask nothing

from it but what it reveals of its maker. We do not ask, What is it? and, Is it made as it ought to be? We say, Who made it? and, Is it characteristic of him? It is thus easy to see why the critic should advance the theory that the criterion in art is the good or bad character of the artist, that the only aesthetic value is the personality impressed upon the work.

This conclusion is understandable and excusable enough under prevailing conditions. The exaggerated importance of the personality of the artist is the direct result of the privation of responsibility which an industrial system imposes on the great majority of workmen. No ordinary product of our factories is a work of art; no factory hand is an artist. Only extraordinary men are artists, and so works of art are chiefly valued as being impressed with these extraordinary personalities. But if excusable, this conclusion is not necessary or inevitable. It is still possible to preserve a true view of the matter and to see, and therefore to say, that what makes a work of art valuable is not the personality impressed on it, but its essential goodness as a thing made. It is still possible to see that the goodness of the thing made is the thing that matters, and that the criterion in art is discoverable only when we know what a thing is in itself.

Whether or no the maker has made it as it ought to be made, whether he has bungled his job, whether he was or was not fitted by mind and by technical skill to undertake it—these are things that can only be decided by those who

know, in the first place, what the thing made is or is supposed to be. A good work of art, then, is a thing that its maker has made as well as it ought to be made. The difficulty of knowing whether a thing has been made well or ill is the difficulty of knowing what are the rules governing the making of this thing or that.

In the arts not called fine arts this difficulty is less, but even so there is infinite latitude for error. Thus: the rules governing the making of a watch are more or less certainly ascertainable, and most men are capable of judging whether or no a watch is good or bad—at least in the elementary matter of whether it keeps time or not. In certain other particulars the matter is still within most people's powers of judgement—thus: whether the watch, being, let us say, for the pocket, fits the pocket easily, whether it is neat or clumsy to hold, and such like matters. Under such a fire of criticism the tendency is for watches to be more and more improved upon, and the ordinary watchmaker or even the ordinary seller of watches supplies all the expert knowledge needed to enable any ordinary person to know a good watch when he sees one. So it is with all the ordinary products of human industry, and, in circumstances where commercial monopolies and frauds do not hinder the free play of human judgement, there are indeed few products which do not come under the category of 'ordinary'. Even most of the things nowadays labelled 'fine arts' are, in a normal human society, the product of quite ordinary men, even though more than ordinarily skilled or trained or gifted.

It is an abnormal condition of things wherein we differentiate between ordinary workmen and artists. The normal differentiation is simply between one kind of artist and another. Thus in a normal human society a mason and a sculptor of images are simply different kinds of artist. The violent distinction of artist and not-artist could hardly exist among workmen in such civilizations as those of Rajput India or mediaeval Europe. Even in England the normal condition lingered up to the end of the eighteenth century, and in out-of-the-way places untouched by mass production and the factory it is still to be found. And, as among ordinary workmen, the makers of ordinary utilities, the distinction between artist and non-artist does not normally exist, so in a normal state the distinction between art and 'fine' art is only made with difficulty, and is more of a philosophical distinction than a practical one. Sculpture and the making of furniture are both jobs in which due regard should be paid to the way the thing, image or table, ought to be made. And who will say that, whereas an image ought to be beautiful, a table need not be so? The conscious effort after beauty is categorically the thing which distinguishes the fine arts from others; but why deny such a conscious effort to one kind of workman and not to another? As practical people and people who suffer from the over-developed self-consciousness and introspection of modern 'artists,' we may well complain that there is altogether too much talk about beauty. We may say: "Look after goodness and truth, and beauty will take

care of itself," and, applying the Gospel, we may say: "He that loseth his life shall save it," as much in art work as in the work of salvation. But in an enquiry of this sort we need not disdain categorical distinctions, and we must distinguish between that kind of workman whose work is primarily judged with regard to its physical utility (as in the case of a watch, whether it keeps good time or not) and that kind whose work is judged primarily with regard to its mental or spiritual fitness. Even so the distinction is not easy to make. There is a border-line on which the physical and mental meet and commingle. The statue of a politician in a public square, the image of a saint on a church porch, the pendant on a woman's neck or the ring on a bishop's hand, are things having as definitely physical utility as mental. A chair has not necessarily any mental utility; a painting has not necessarily any physical utility. But some chairs have more than merely physical utility (e.g., a bishop's or even a grandfather's) and some paintings have more than merely mental utility (e.g., a painted reredos or a postage stamp—such things subserve and influence the physical life of men).

The solution of the problem is to be found in the first quotation at the beginning of this article. It is the distinction, in the scholastic phrases, between *finis operis* and *finis operantis*—the end of the work and the end of the worker. Art, as such, is not concerned with the end of the worker, but with that of the work. In the case of objects of pure utility—e.g., an ordinary chair—the work

is judged with regard to its fitness to do the job of a chair. A chair is called good if a man may safely and comfortably sit upon it. But if safety be a matter we may deem easily ascertainable, comfort is a very complicated business; and it is probably true to say that a chair very comfortable to lounge in on a fine day at the seaside would be definitely uncomfortable in a drawing-office, and such a chair as is in every way suitable for a draughtsman would greatly incommode a judge on the bench or a bishop in his cathedral. Much more, then, than just support for the body is required of even so common an object as a chair. Indeed, it emerges that support for the body is of the least importance, that, as in the case of clothes—things which at first sight seem to have no reason for existence but that of physical comfort—dignity and adornment are paramount and physical convenience quite subordinate.

At the other end of the pole are objects which we take to be of no use whatever—things, like paintings and poems and symphonies, that seem to have no physical service to render. With regard to these we are led into the opposite error. Starting, naturally enough, with the idea that they exist simply to increase human dignity and pleasure, we judge them good if they praise man and magnify his name, and, accordingly, a good painting or poem or piece of music is one which expresses a magnificent man. Thus, by appreciation of his work, we share in his powers. It is a kind of snobbery—we are the best people because we know the best people. But, as a matter of fact, the personality

of the artist matters little enough. The very great majority of works of painting, poetry, and music are commissioned, like chairs and watches, for quite definite place and occasion. It emerges that human dignity and glorification are of the least importance, that the public record of some important truth or event or the necessary dignity of some building or liturgy is paramount and human self-expression quite subordinate.

The impersonal quality of all the great pre-Renaissance art is obvious. The Renaissance discovered man and made the most of him. The self-revealing quality of the great artists of the Renaissance and of all artists since that time is as obvious as the impersonal quality of pre-Renaissance art. The present movement, called 'post-Impressionist,' is equally obviously a reaction against this personal business; it is a return to the objective view of the matter, and this, curiously enough, in spite of the predilection of many people for the subjectivism of Gentile and Croce, in spite of their dislike, even hatred (when they have heard of it), of the scholastic and Catholic position.

It is not to be denied, of course, that the great sculptures of Chartres do, in fact, reveal to us something of the personality of their authors; but this is the necessary accident of all human work, the necessary and delightful accident. It is not the *raison d'être* of such work; it is not its chief claim to our admiration or attention. Nor is it to be denied that the paintings of Picasso or of Cezanne do reveal the personality of their authors; but, as with the sculptures of

Chartres, this personal revelation is their least important claim to attention. The outstanding difference between this modern (post-Impressionist) work and that ancient (mediaeval) work is not in the expression of personality, but in the difference of their objective circumstance. The modern artist is isolated; he is an eccentric. He has the same natural and normal incentive to creative activity; he has the same thirst for objective beauty, the same loves and hates; but he has not the same clientele. No longer is he naturally employed as part of the ordinary gang of builders or furniture-makers. He is simply his own employer; there is no natural or proper place for anything he makes; the pedestal, the gilt frame, the concert hall, isolate him and his work from everything around it. It is not he who is abnormal; it is his age and circumstance.

It is an abnormal state of things wherein the person with the appetite for making things is the last person to be employed. Consider the enormous amount of sculpture, for instance, on modern buildings (it is impossible to estimate the amount spent on imitation 'gothic' or 'classical' carving), and then consider the remarkable fact that hardly a cubic inch of it is done by anyone who really wants to do it or cares whether it be done or not. It is all the work of employees, whose chief interest in the matter is the wages they are paid. The isolation of the modern artist is the thing that chiefly differentiates him, and this isolation is not only his ruin, it is the ruin of all art-criticism. The very notion of art is now discredited; it is

the greatest of luxuries, the most pampered of lap-dogs, and the artist who rebels against this sort of thing follows the most forlorn of hopes. The plain unvarnished truth of an ordinary electrical switchboard is refreshing after the turmoil of introspection and despair that art is now condemned to—the complete inhumanity of such things seems preferable to the strident self-consciousness of his own work—much more is it preferable to the nauseating sentimentalism of popular realistic painting.

I said that the exaggerated importance now attached to the personality of the artist is the direct result of the privation of responsibility which afflicts ordinary production, and this is true. But with special regard to the fine arts, a comparison of pre-Renaissance with post-Renaissance work reveals another cause equally far-reaching and effective. Before the Renaissance¹ picture-painting and sculpture (even music and poetry) were part of the ordinary production of buildings and furniture. You did not buy a picture for the sake of such and such an artist's prowess, in spite of the notoriety of individual artists here and there. You bought it because you had need of it, and you naturally employed the best man known to you. You employed painters as you still employ paper-hangers; you employed

¹ It is impossible to give any exact date for such a happening. The change of point of view cannot be said to have begun in such and such a year. All we can say is that the fever was at its highest about the fifteenth century in Italy and somewhat more than a century later in England.

sculptors as you still employ architects. But the increased interest in 'nature' and in 'man' and in the appearance of nature and of man, and the increased skill with which these appearances were imitated by painters and sculptors, and the consequent increase in the education of the vision of ordinary persons, all these things combined to bring about a different point of view as to the very nature of the job of the artist in these special departments. The artist regarded himself more and more as the interpreter of nature, and the buyer regarded him more and more as the purveyor of delightfully realistic scenes and images. The inferior kind of painter and sculptor pandered more and more to this, in itself, quite innocent appetite for realism. Sentimentalism and anecdotage were the inevitable end, and the nineteenth century with its Royal Academies and Salons saw the climax of the movement.

It is necessary to diagnose this thing very clearly. What is the real and precise difference between pre- and post-Renaissance painting? It is that, since the Renaissance (until the twentieth-century reaction, of which Cezanne was in one department the instigator), the painter has definitely taken the rôle of critic. Before the Renaissance he was not a critic of anything; he was simply a maker of painted reredoses, wall decorations, etc. Since the Renaissance he is maker of such things only by accident; before the Renaissance he was critic only by accident. The word critic is, I believe, the correct one, but it requires some safeguarding. By critic is not necessarily meant an adverse

critic. A critical mind is not necessarily one that seeks or finds faults in things. A critical mind is simply one that looks on things from outside. As a result of the Renaissance man found himself outside Nature. No longer was he part of Nature, working as an instrument, God's instrument, consciously or unconsciously. Man got outside himself as well as outside the visible world. He looked at himself and at the world, and painting became his critical appraisal of what he saw. But the dramatic movement of men and things that first enthralled the Renaissance painters (the anecdotal or narrative content of pictures, their literary content), which is, moreover, the primary attraction to ordinary buyers of pictures, became, in the mind of the more serious artists, less and less important. The quality of the artist's vision, his critical discernment, his visual perspicacity—these things combined with manual dexterity (vision and technique) came to be regarded as all that mattered. Under these circumstances the modern enquirer is to be excused if, forgetting or not knowing the effects of commercialism and industrialism on the general work of the world, and forgetting or not knowing the effects of the Renaissance on the particular work called fine art, he thinks of art as being only fine art, and of fine art as being chiefly valuable as an exhibition of the personality of the artist.

But if moral values are not the criterion, what is? The answer is, in one word, beauty. Beauty is the criterion. Beauty—the shining out of being (*splendor formae*) order manifest, conspicuous, resplendent. This is the criterion in

all the works of men. Beauty is not, as some think, an effeminate quality. "The beauty of God is the cause of the being of all that is" ("Ex divina pulchritudine esse omnium derivatur." St Thomas Aquinas, 'De div. nom.,' Lect. V). Nor is beauty an ornamental extra added to otherwise ugly things. Beauty is the very being of all good works regarded in themselves, seen. "A beautiful thing is that which being seen pleases" (St Thomas Aquinas, 'Sum. Theol.,' I, Q. v, art. 4 ad 1); seen, not merely known (as who should say: "I see what you mean"), and the pleasure is not the pleasure of seeing, but the pleasure of the mind in its apprehension of the thing itself. "Art abides entirely on the side of the mind" (Maritain, 'The Philosophy of Art,' p. 17 of the English translation).

In all the arts of men this thing called beauty is ultimately the sole criterion. But a chair, a ship, a watch, and all the things of utility are commonly judged in the first place with regard to their mere serviceableness. We speak of a good watch or a bad one before we speak of a beautiful or ugly watch. This is because, in the stress of human life, contemplation, Mary's part, is the part of the few. In the stress of life we consider primarily the use a thing is to us, and we are content if we are well served. Nor is there necessarily any harm in this. A watch is a thing to measure time with; a thing purporting to be a watch which yet does not keep time is, in fact, not a watch at all. If it keeps time passably well, we say it is a passably good watch. If it do not, we rightly condemn it as bad and a fraud.

But if, in addition to ticking off the minutes and hours—if, in addition to doing its job—it is also satisfactory to look at, to hold, to hear—if its very being is delightful to the mind—then we may rightly say it is more than merely a good watch: we may rightly call it beautiful.

The making of watches is not called a fine art, because the watchmaker does not deliberately set out to make a thing which shall have no other quality but that of giving pleasure to the mind of him who contemplates its being. The term 'fine art' is rightly confined to those arts in which men, forgetting all the business of doing, of service, of utility, concentrate their whole attention upon making. A work of fine art is one which, strictly speaking, has no use whatever. It does nothing. It serves no one. It is; and it is beautiful. It ministers to the mind alone.

It may well be doubted whether indeed such a thing as a work of fine art is really possible to man. Certainly such works are rare, if only because few people will put down money for things which have no use. Such things have mental utility—they give pleasure to the mind; but they have no physical use. Nevertheless, they are less rare to-day than in any other time in human history. This remarkable state of things is due to the fact that, though the sense of beauty is common enough (it is connatural to man; it is the very stuff of his mind), there is no longer any call for its exercise in the ordinary walks of life. We have so arranged things that if a man cares for the well-making of ordinary things he shall be an outcast, and shall only with the greatest

difficulty make a living. Beauty being the criterion of making, those who are conscious of it and at the same time desire it and who at the same time must earn a living, must more and more be thrown upon the profession of artist in the special sense of one engaged in the fine arts. There is no other line of business. A revival of "arts and crafts" has been attempted, but the competition with the factory involved is too great and the position of the 'artist-craftsman' too artificial. If a man is consciously an artist, it is better that he should go straight to beauty as unalloyed as may be, than that he should make 'artistic' tables and chairs. Truly it is an absurd position, but there is no remedy save the complete destruction of a civilization in which money is god and men of commerce are our rulers. This destruction will come about without any need for 'revolutionary' activity. Let no one suppose I propose to wave a red flag. The present civilization is founded upon an unnatural condition and will come to a natural end. If there are battles, murders, and sudden deaths it will not be the fault of the artist. He is, of all men, the least fitted for political enterprise and the least desirous of embarking on it. "Without him the city is not built, but he shall not go up and down therein...."¹

In the presence of so great difficulties it seems necessary to review our foundations. Let us say, to begin with, that we base ourselves upon the following affirmations: There is God. There is that which is not God—the spiritual and

¹ Ecclesiasticus xxxviii, 36-7—but see the whole chapter.

material creation, made by God out of nothing (nothing, strictly so called). This creation is a gratuity, and it is an expression of God's love for himself.

In contradistinction to the Pantheists, who say that all is God and that the distinction of matter and spirit is an illusion, and to the Manichees, who say that not all is God, and that what is not God is evil, we affirm that matter and spirit are both real and both good. We affirm that God has created spirits who are not material, but simply persons, and that he has created matter which is not personal, but simply measurable. We affirm that he created man—both material and spiritual. These are the foundations for any christian aesthetic.

God, pure Being, willed the existence of something not himself. We say he made heaven and earth and all things. We say that as maker he is artist. The thing made is a work of art, and, like all works of art, it was ordered in such sort that the perfection or goodness of the thing made is assured, not that of its maker but that of the thing itself. God's creation manifests his glory, but it was not made in order to that manifestation. It is in the strictest sense gratuitous. God has no need of it. His glory cannot be increased or diminished.

But man, unlike God, is unable to create; he cannot make out of nothing. He is only creator in, so to say, the second degree. He can only make out of what God has made. But having free will (for a spiritual being is a person, is necessarily a rational being, and necessarily has free will)

he is a really responsible workman, and is the only possible maker of the things which, in the exercise of his free will, he makes.

God's work of creation was gratuitous. Man also is able to make gratuitously. He is able to make things simply because it pleases him so to do, and things such that they are simply pleasing to him. Such things are works of art pure and simple. They leave the world better than they found it, but that is not their *raison d'être*; their reason of being is the pleasure pure and undiluted of the rational being who made them. They do not set out to serve him; they add to his physical well-being only by accident.

But in addition to works of art pure and simple there are things of which man has need—chairs, clothes, books.... These things he makes for his own service and for that of his fellow-men, and these things are so many and so various that most men are fully occupied in their making. Moreover, the need of such things is for most men the necessary spur to action. "Adam sinned when he fell from contemplation," and contemplation has become the exception instead of the rule. Nevertheless, Mary's is not only the better part, it is also the part most deeply connatural to man, and, even in the business of service, the workman, left to himself, can hardly refrain from contemplation; he will consider even a walking-stick as a thing in itself, worth making, worth having, worth seeing, and will forget all lame men.

There is, further, the question of justice, and forasmuch

as all men must eat in order to live, all men must either supply themselves or be supplied with food. If a man do not, or cannot, supply himself, others must supply him, and in that case justice demands an exact equivalent from him in return. But as "you cannot shoot the square root of 2 with a gun," so you cannot justly offer works of art for bread. The workman must render some service by his works or else live on gratuities. It happens, therefore, that most works of art are not bought as such, nor are most workmen artists pure and simple. There is no need to complain of this state of affairs, for the 'happy fault' of Adam which earned us Redemption has also been the occasion of countless works of glory, and has made necessary a multitude of things in which man has found opportunity for contemplative activity.

Again let us recollect ourselves. I set out to proclaim that the criterion of art is beauty—not the moral character of the artist. I affirm, with the philosopher, that beauty is resplendent Being. I affirm that this property properly pertains to all the works of men, and that the fine arts are only distinguished from the useful arts as being those in which beauty is the object by definition, whereas in the useful arts the service rendered by the work seems to be the object.

I am content to let serviceableness remain the immediate criterion in the judgement of works of utility. I only demand that serviceableness shall be strictly criticized and utility taken in its widest sense. From matchboxes to

church images both the service required of things and their ability to render it are often misunderstood. A host of silly things is made merely for the profit of manufacturers. The factory hand has no liberty to use intelligence; the buyer does not trouble to use his. The power of industrialism to turn out vast quantities of neat and handy articles is wasted in the production of senseless ornament and sentimental imitations. Let those who buy things ask themselves in each case what the thing they need really is, and then let them criticize the goods offered with the utmost strictness of which they are capable. And, as a practical rule, let them remember that ornament is "the exuberance of good workmanship" and cannot be supplied by machinery. I am content to let serviceableness remain the criterion in all works of utility because, apart from the fact that an industrialized civilization can have no other, the feebleness of man's spirit, his proneness to self-aggrandizement, his sensuality, his silliness, always lead him astray. He cannot commonly be left to indulge his proper appetite for beauty unalloyed. Beauty comes to his work unasked when he works in a spirit of plain justice; when he considers simply the use of what he is making and the service of his fellows.

When it comes to things not merely physically useful, such as church buildings and images, statues and portraits, then, though serviceableness may well still be the immediate criterion, it is not so easily applied. The exact use of a church is not easy to define; the use of a statue of the

Madonna is not so clear as that of a fountain-pen. The use of a statue of the late Mr Gladstone it is almost impossible to discover. None the less, such things have a use, and their utility is, for the buyer, their first claim to existence. Again, criticism, strictly reasonable, must be our aid.

What, oh what, is a madonna?—and note, I do not ask who was the Madonna—that is more or less easily answered—but what is the thing, whether of paint or stone or glass, which we call a madonna? What is the essence of this thing? What is its use to us? What effect has the material of which it is made, and the place for which it is made, upon its shape? I shall not attempt to answer these questions. It is sufficient for the purpose of this essay to state that when we judge a madonna, whether by the ultimate criterion of beauty or the immediate criterion of serviceableness, our judgement is founded upon our answers to these questions. If we deem that the workman has understood these questions and answered them justly in his work, then we deem his work good. Beauty is the criterion, but we apply it, in such matters as architecture and the painting or carving of images, without knowing it; we are content to judge by the criterion of serviceableness, knowing or being content with the assurance that, looking after the good and true, beauty will take care of itself. For in discovering what a thing is, we look after truth; in making well the thing whose being is thus known, we look after goodness; and beauty, which proceeds from goodness and truth, is the resplendent though unsought reward.

What is wrong with the ordinary products of architects and furniture shops (ecclesiastical or other) is precisely the unreasonableness of such things; as the rightness of such things when they are right is precisely their reasonableness. Giotto is a most reasonable of Christian illustrators, Cimabue a most reasonable of dogmatic painters. The gothicness of the new Liverpool Cathedral is an unreasonableness and rightly causes disgust—its mass and proportion, though greatly confused by that trifling, are reasonable and therefore pleasing.

Yet it must not be supposed that it is by a process of ratiocination that we arrive at such conclusions when confronted by these works. The mind unsullied by unreason delights spontaneously in beautiful things. The good artist is not necessarily a good logician; he is simply a man whose mind works well in relation to his work—who puts the first thing first.

Doubtless it is hard doctrine that always the beautiful is the reasonable and at the same time the unreasoned—that as you cannot make a beautiful thing by a process of ratiocination, so you cannot argue yourself into an apprehension of beauty. Nevertheless it is the truth of the matter.

Lastly, there is the application of the criterion, beauty, in the case of the fine arts strictly and specially so called. Privation of what is due is the only misery. A bad work of art is simply one whose due has been denied to it. Neither likeness to the appearance of nature (verisimilitude) nor

didactic effectiveness, neither interesting or noble literary content nor the expression of the high moral character of the artist, are the criteria for the judging of works of art, though one or all of these things may be found in such works. And with works of fine art there is no criterion of use to guide us; man is only indirectly served by such things; the good of man, even his final end in beatitude, is no part of the business of the artist as such; the good of the work alone concerns him. Thus we must leave it. The mind of man desires good, and, however limited, knows truth. Confronted by reality, by being, purely such, externalized in matter, the mind is delighted; it is in the presence of what properly belongs to it; it comes into its own.

THE FUTURE OF SCULPTURE

THE art of sculpture is the making of things in three dimensions such that being seen they please the eye and the mind.

The special department of this art with which we are here concerned is that called **FIGURE SCULPTURE**.

Figure sculpture is, of course, the making of images of things seen and known, but the degree of likeness to the thing seen or known depends upon innumerable considerations, and varies from what is called 'a speaking likeness' to a simple abstraction. Moreover the thing made may seem to have departed altogether from the sphere of the seen and known and to have entered into that of pure invention or creation.

These three things determine all works of sculpture.

From the point of view of the buyer the 'speaking likeness' is the chief consideration. The artist, the sculptor, though he may, and generally does, to some extent share the point of view of the buyer—the sculptor oscillates between the effort to abstract and the effort to create or invent.

The artist purely as such is the creator; he collaborates with God in creating.

Art improves on Nature. That is what it is for.

Man is artist, man is normally the artist—the maker of things. Man naturally desires good and therefore good things. Man as artist naturally desires to make good things—things good in themselves—like God, he would survey his handiwork and see that it is good.

In a broad view of this Universe, man's place is that of God's instrument for a further degree of poignancy in the manifestation of love—of God's love of himself.

So much for man's place as an inhabitant of a material planet. But a creature thus constituted, having free will and consequent responsibility, is necessarily immortal. He is concerned therefore not only with the good of the work (though that be the glory of God and a sufficiently noble concern) but with his own good—his last end, *Finis operis*, the end of the work, is the business of ART; *finis operantis*, the end of the worker, is the business of PRUDENCE.

Between these two horns lies the dilemma; for man allowed himself to forget his last end and has consequently inherited a corrupted will and a world full of evil.

Nevertheless, in spite of all the disgusting mess which ill will has brought into existence, man still yearns for his normal occupation as collaborator with God in creating and still endeavours to play the artist. As artist, he starts with the idea of man as right and the world right. On the other hand, the man of prudence, specially so called, the moralist, the ethical teacher, starts with the idea of man as wrong and the world wrong. Both ideas are to be com-

mended, but the man of prudence, the moralist, is, in fact, the more correct. Nevertheless, the artist's forlorn hope is always to be followed, and he will always follow it. He will always be somewhat of a PELAGIAN in practice and will act as though man has never 'fallen'—as though all men were innocent (himself included, which is absurd) and all work were play. And, on the other hand, the moralist will always be something of a PURITAN in practice and will tend to act as though all material activity were essentially evil and art in particular were a devil who, unless chained up to verisimilitude or didacticism, were not to be allowed out.

But all things are mixed—art and prudence inextricably. Even we artists are not entirely devoid of a moral sense, and even moralists have from time to time allowed themselves to be disinterested—for that is the important distinction. For the moralist there is always the question: what will be the result?—to what end is it the means? But for the artist (that normal fellow) the result does not matter; he is not concerned with means, but with things which are ends in themselves.

Hence the besetting sin of the artist is idolatry; an idol is an end that is not God. But the besetting sin of the moralist is money; for money is nothing but a means to something else.

All the best art is religious. Religious means according to the rule of God. All art that is godly, that is, made without concern for worldly advantage, is religious.

The great religions of the world have always resulted in great artistic creation because they have helped to set man free from himself—have provided a discipline under which men can work and in which commerce is subordinated.

Inasmuch as the christian artist is employed to represent christian verities, then, as regards what we may call literary content, christian art may be said to be better than non-christian. But literary content is not the primary business of the artist—it is simply something he is employed for and paid to do. A good artist will do it well—a bad artist will do it badly. A good artist is not simply an artist with a good subject. A good artist is simply a man who apprehends and submits to the will of God for the work—as a good man is one who apprehends and submits to the will of God for the deed.

* * *

It is by now quite clear that the future of sculpture is the Museum. I mean, of course, the immediate future. Ultimately, or in the far distant future, man will undoubtedly return to a new beginning. The present state of things cannot last for ever; it is founded upon an unnatural condition. In the nature of things man is a responsible creature; he has free will. What he does, what he makes, are things for which he is responsible. The present organization of industry deprives all but a few artists of any responsibility whatever. The bulk of things made to-day are made under what we call factory conditions, and those

conditions are such that of no factory article can you say any man was responsible for making it—it is simply the result of a number of men doing precisely what they were told to do. It is true that the majority of factory hands are content with this condition and even seek to make it absolute. The servile state, however we may jib at the sound of the words, is not only a thing in being—it lacks only legal sanction—it is a thing which most workmen of to-day desire and demand. The appetite for freedom and responsibility is no longer urgent. All that is demanded is security of employment and adequate remuneration and amusement. Nevertheless, this is an unnatural condition, though it is the natural result of industrialism, and while we continue to conduct our affairs on industrial lines, with men of commerce as our rulers and commercial success as our one criterion, we can look for nothing else. Let those who like it enjoy it while it lasts. After all it has its advantages. Innumerable conveniences of daily life are obtainable to-day which were hitherto beyond the dreams of avarice. Queen Elizabeth could not use a telephone. King Alfred had no fountain pen. Orpheus never “listened in.”

But the reduction of the majority of men and women (for women also are—and with avidity—embracing industrial life) to a sub-human condition of irresponsibility as regards the product of their labour is essentially against nature and therefore against God. Never mind—that is not here my affair. I am not concerned with that. I am concerned with

the "future of sculpture" and must confine my attention to the immediate future.

Sculpture is, in the special sense of figure sculpture and decorative carving, the making of abstractions, inventions and representations in three dimensions. Now, such things cost money: that is to say, they occupy time which might otherwise be used for supplying the immediate needs of the body—food and shelter. If men are going to spend their time in such an occupation someone has got to feed and house them. That's clear. That has always been clear. Who is going to do it? On the answer to this question the future depends. Who is the customer of the artist? Who provides him with bread and butter? And, as regards my special subject, who is going to provide bread and butter for sculptors?

It is clear enough that in the past the bulk of the employment of sculptors was in connection with architecture and it is also clear that the bulk of architectural sculpture was ecclesiastical. That is understandable enough. Religion and churches offer a natural field for such things. I am not now concerned with the reasons for this, and any way it is not a difficult matter. What I am concerned with is the fact that the Church is no longer the 'best buyer' of art in general or of sculpture in particular. The Church is no longer of paramount importance in human affairs. Underneath the surface she still wields the most important influence, and in that distant future with which I am not concerned, she will emerge again into the front line

of governors. But at present and in the immediate future we may count the Church as being down and out as far as we are concerned. The Church has always bought freely and without discrimination what was nearest to hand—she has always bought in the cheapest market, and when the ideas, the fundamental ideas, governing the market were ideas for the propagation and support of which she was directly responsible (because she was the chief voice in matters of the mind), in such a time there was nothing to complain of—church work corresponded with Church teaching. But to-day the country is no longer governed by Church teaching—far from it. The result is that church art and Church teaching have nothing in common, and artists can no longer look to her for employment except as an exceptional stroke of luck. The Church, I mean of course the Catholic Church, is not a cultured set—she knows nothing of art—she buys what is to hand. It is not her fault if what is to hand is not worth buying. She is concerned with the end of MAN—hence her pre-occupation with faith and morals, in which alone is she inerrant. And the practical application of faith and morals is prudence. The Church is not concerned with the end of man's WORK—hence she is not an authority on aesthetics and knows nothing of art.

To-day it is clear that our real governors are the men of commerce, and they also, like the Church before them, buy in the cheapest market, and to-day the ideas of the market are the ideas of men of commerce undiluted by any

“other-worldly” considerations whatever—the nearest approach to other-worldliness being contained in such phrases as “safety first,” “honesty is the best policy,” and “enlightened self-interest.” The market for works of art—works of sculpture—is therefore governed by persons of even less cultural pretensions than were possessed by ecclesiastical governors and the makers of such things can look to men of commerce with even less confidence. If ecclesiastics naturally delight in large and grand churches, men of commerce naturally delight in large and grand banks and insurance buildings. True, they will seek to have these covered with sculptures, and will order corinthian capitals by the dozen and many elegant ladies reclining over doorways, but such things are themselves merely the production of commercial enterprise and are supplied by the contractor on the same principles as the drains—and this is as it should be. Such things are not sculpture in the special sense in which I and we are interested. The special kind of sculpture with which I am concerned is that which is the product of MEN, not mere contractor’s hacks; of ARTISTS, not mere factory hands. For such work there is no place on modern building. How could there be? The best modern architects are now quickly coming to see this. There is a laudable tendency among architects to eschew all sculpture and to confine themselves to plain building. Sad as this may be from the point of view of sculptors (for architecture must always offer the best opportunity for sculpture and the collabora-

tion of architect and sculptor must always be the dream of both), sad as the present tendency must be, nevertheless it would be sadder still to continue the worn-out pretence. There is, in fact, no compatibility between the work of a man who does not merely care for his work but for whom his work is the most important thing in life—the one thing worth doing—and that of the gang of more or less unwilling slaves, the more or less doped employees of a modern building contractor. The modern architect is right—let the sculpture go. Let him confine himself to the scale and proportion of his building. Sculpture is unnecessary. From the pyramid of Cheops to the unfinished interior of Westminster Cathedral, architectural grandeur has never been dependent on sculpture.

This essentially optimistic view of the matter—for it is optimistic thus to take it for granted that reasonableness will so far prevail in the immediate future—this optimistic view leads us to the statement with which I began—the future for sculpture is the Museum. There is, of course, the mantelshelf. But what is the mantelshelf but everyman's own little home museum? And what are private collectors but the owners of private museums? I make no complaint of this state of things. "It's no good," as you may have heard, "crying over spilt milk," and the milk of human kindness to art and artists is completely spilt and the pitcher broken into a million fragments. And, as also you may have heard, 'we can't be ancient Britons' or 'put back the clock.' These home truths are very salutary.

We've jolly well got to take things as they are—we artists. The time is past when it seemed worth while to band ourselves into 'Arts and Crafts Movements' and to join 'Fabian Societies,' or 'Art Workers' Guilds.' The business of 'social reform' is outside the sphere of artists. Their business is to get on with the work and leave government and social reform to men of prudence.

Get on with the work. And let no sculptor complain that there is no work or that he has no work to do. There is always stone or clay lying about, and if it should happen that he can find no one to buy his work, then it is simply up to him to consider whether some branch of commercial enterprise is not perhaps his true vocation. It may well be so.

And one very important result of thus setting the sculptor free from any collaboration with the Church or commerce or architecture is that he is thus enabled to try innumerable amusing experiments in purely aesthetic development. He need no longer be didactic or expository or anecdotal to please sentimental ecclesiastics. Nor need he be merely imitative or naturalistic or clever and intricate to please princes of commerce, whose one idea is aggrandizement. Nor need he work in this style or that to satisfy the requirements of some architect or suffer the pain of seeing his works of love stuck in contact with machine-made masonry. He is free from all such things.

But, swept and garnished, he is beset by seven other devils. Now the warfare is purely spiritual. What is

beauty? What is 'significant form'? What is the connection between the idea in the mind and the material under the hand? How much is the one dependent on the other? So we return to our beginnings, and like a cave man carving a bone we can again find in art the pure delight of the intelligence collaborating with God in creating.

ART- NONSENSE

A FINE omnium gatherum might be made on the subject of Art-Nonsense. Here I shall only attempt to collect the few samples that have come my way, heedless if some of my own notions or writings appear in the net.

If, as I have said elsewhere and often, art is skill, skill in making, deliberate human skill, then, as it is obvious that skill is always with us, it would seem that art is always with us and that therefore those who talk of art as a thing of the past are talking nonsense. They are indeed. And if art is skill, then the making of a typewriter is art as much as the making of a statue. And this is so. Therefore those who speak or write of art as being exclusively the job of painting pictures or carving statues and of painters and sculptors as being the only artists are talking or writing nonsense—as indeed they are. These two forms of art-nonsense are the parents of all others. That art is not now and is not here, whereas art is always and everywhere; these are the prolific progenitors of all the brood of false theories and false notions about art common to men.

And false theories and notions inspire false practice. The false theory, for example, that gothic architecture was the invention of ecclesiastics and was therefore the style most suitable for churches is even to this day the inspiration for

countless imitation gothic buildings. The truth is that in the middle ages building was a job like engineering and that what was a suitable method for building a high stone vault was a suitable method whether the vault was that of church or castle. The church made an 'effective demand' on those whose skill and enthusiasm it was to make high vaults, but high vaults were not therefore ecclesiastical either in idea or in production. Moreover it was only in northern Europe that the demand for high-vaulted buildings was made. In other parts 'the gothic' was much less popular. In Italy, a part of Europe that can hardly be excluded from ecclesiastical influence, 'gothic' was a foreign language and, at the Renaissance, such small influence as it had had was much more easily thrown off than, at the Reformation, the 'yoke' of Rome was thrown off by England.

But if the notion that gothic art is of ecclesiastical origin is a superstition and therefore evil in its effects, much more superstitious and much more effectively evil is the notion that art is confined to the business of painting and sculpture. The activity called art embraces all making and the ability and enthusiasm to make things is common to man. The most unsettled nomadic peoples, the most 'primitive' races of barbarians, even the most commercially minded peoples of industrialized countries like England and America are as conspicuous for the things they make as are highly cultured peoples like the Chinese or Assyrians, the Greeks or Egyptians, or the people of mediaeval Europe. The enthusiasm

for making is a 'constant'; what is not constant is, on the one hand, the 'effective demand' and, on the other, the incidence of responsibility.

Effective demand: that is to say, not merely what people want made but also what they are able to pay for. Take the word pay in its widest sense—even the labour of slaves must be paid for and a painter of pictures, however disinterested he may think himself, is a charge upon the community he adorns. But apart from slaves, who work willy-nilly, and apart from painters who imagine they are working for nothing, the great majority of people who work are no more discriminating as to the form of work demanded of them than the buyer is discriminating as to the intrinsic quality of the work offered. The maker of things makes the thing that is wanted and naturally works for the highest price he can get; the buyer buys what he wants in the cheapest market he can find and this applies to all men from the highest to the lowest. The great enthusiasm for stone building which characterized the middle ages in northern Europe was an enthusiasm precisely similar to that for the development of iron and steel construction which characterized the nineteenth century in the same countries. The constant effort to cut down both the costs of production and the prices of things made which characterizes the present time was equally present at all other times. The Church was no more ready to pay 2d. for what it could get for 1d. in the thirteenth century than it is now in the twentieth.

It is not my business here to discuss whether or no a stone building is better than an iron one. It is not my present business to criticize the ideas or ideals which distinguish one country from another. It is quite obvious that some ideas are better, as approaching nearer to truth, than others. It is equally obvious that one age may produce better painting, another better engineering, another better police. Whether a handwritten book is better than one printed by machinery is a department of art-nonsense I am not now concerned with. The point here is that the activity of man which results in the making of things is the thing called art and it is art-nonsense to say that because the Forth Bridge is made of iron it is not a work of art.

The men who make things, the artists or, as we may say, the 'making men,' make what is demanded of them in this as in any other age. The effective demand in the way of building is, to-day, for buildings of iron. It is art-nonsense to pretend that such buildings are inartistic unless, like the Tower Bridge, they be plastered over with the pale cast of imitation gothic, or, like the new Adelaide House at London Bridge, imitate the solidity and weight of stone construction.

We may take it, then, that works of art are not more scarce to-day than at any other time. They take a different form. And they take a different form because the demand has changed. Modern England is not a paradise for small craftsmen any more than it is for small shop-keepers or small farmers. Men and women who find themselves called to such occupations are therefore wise if they look upon them-

selves in precisely the same way as picture painters and sculptors must do at the present time. They must consider their job as a 'fine' art and make no pretence of competition with the manufacturers and men of commerce who produce things in mass for the masses. There is a lot of art-nonsense about the 'arts and crafts movement' and all the 'peasant arts' and 'back to the land' business. Art and morals have got mixed and people who are simply responsible workmen, making this or that deliberately as well as they know how and doing so for the sake of the thing made, are in precisely the same position as any responsible chemist or engineer. If, on the other hand, they do their work with some idea of social reform or moral rectitude they make nonsense of their whole business. It is no more immoral to make things by machinery than by hand. It is immoral to make things badly and pretend that they are good and no amount of 'hand' is an excuse for stupidity or inefficiency.

But while we are thus scornful of the art-nonsense of the 'hand-work' business we need not be blind to the equally inane attitude of 'big business' people. They also seek to excuse themselves on the ground of being social reformers and patriots. Social reform is no more their business than it is that of artists. Their reason of being is the same as that of any person whose job it is to make things. When we read that Pink Pills are good for Pale People we are receiving interesting information and are concerned to find out if it be true in exactly the same frame of mind as when we are told that an iron bridge is better than a stone one. But

when we are informed that Dr Williams is not interested either in pills or money but is solely influenced by love of his fellow sufferers we are as sickened as we are by the art-nonsense of vegetarian handicraftsmen. The nonsense talked and printed in favour of 'Empire-grown' tobacco is as stupid as it is mendacious and it is the stupidity that matters most, because it is things, not persons, that we are concerned with when we smoke tobacco.

Social reform is the business of those who know the nature and destiny of man. The trouble with the present age is that it is just the knowledge of those things which it is most uncertain about and consequently politics and social guidance are left to a crowd of amateurs—novelists, multiple-store keepers, manufacturers of motor-cars or chemicals—whose profession of disinterestedness is only slightly more credible than that of thieves and robbers.

But I am not concerned with these obliquities. I am only concerned to point out that the art-nonsense of saying things are necessarily good because they are made by hand is exactly balanced by that of saying things are necessarily better when made by 'big business.' Criticism of the thing made is the only course in either case and the basis of artistic and aesthetic criticism is neither moral nor hygienic.

Moral considerations and considerations of health are only factors in artistic criticism inasmuch as it must be remembered that things made are things made for men and by men. A house, for example, is a thing for men and it must be

made by men. A good house is one that is good for the purpose to which a man will put it and, on the face of it, it would appear that though a man can build a good house for rabbits, rabbits cannot build a good house for men. A man can build a good rabbit-house because the domestic rabbit, to anyone but a lunatic, has no more rights or aspirations than a boot. But a rabbit cannot build a good house for men because it has no understanding, imaginative or otherwise, of what, to a man, a house is. It would be absurd to insist on all this were it not for the fact that certain kinds of social organization tend to turn men, especially working-men, the men we depend on for making things, into a species of rabbit. In a system of industrialism like that we enjoy to-day there is undoubtedly a decrease of intellectual responsibility both among the 'hands' employed in factories and among their employers. For though a high level of animal efficiency is attained by industrial methods and the human race will soon be able to claim to be as animally suited to its environment as are rats (both employers and employees understand the value of speed and cheapness and quantity—criteria for judgement which rats and rabbits also employ), yet even Mr Ford and Mr Morris would hesitate to affirm that 'getting away quickly' was of as high importance in human as in rat affairs.

The enthusiasm for making is a 'constant'; the effective demand for this thing or that is a 'variable.' What we demand differs from what our ancestors demanded in the past or our neighbours demand to-day. Whether the Forth

Bridge and the Nile Dam at Assuan supply the demands of a better or worse type of man than did the cathedral of Chartres or the Pyramid of Cheops is not an artistic question at all. The artistic question is simply whether the Forth Bridge is a good job of work and our answer to that question need have no reference whatever either to the fact that it was made by a million slaves acting under the guidance of one engineer or to the fact, if it be a fact, that it was made by a railway company in order that rubbish might more cheaply be conveyed across the Firth of Forth. Such considerations lead to art-nonsense.

And if the effective demand is a variable so also is the incidence of responsibility. I am responsible for making these remarks, but I am not in the least responsible for making the paper I am writing on. It is the product of the combined labours of several thousand people acting strictly under orders. The orders were probably given by some efficient manufacturer acting under the advice of paper experts on the one hand and financial experts on the other. I may therefore hold the manufacturer responsible but I cannot praise or blame anyone of his several thousands of employees.

Now the 'arts and crafts' critic says that this method of production, by depriving the buyer of personal relationship with the actual makers of things, by making the financially-biassed manufacturer the one responsible person, tends to bring about the degradation of things made. It makes possible a host of developments which have only the in-

crease of profit for their reason of being, and developments which a responsible workman in personal touch with his customers would introduce for the improvement of the thing made are neglected.

On the other hand, the supporter of industrialism says that without subdivision of labour and standardization and mass-production it would not be possible for people not exceedingly rich to have many very useful and desirable things. From sanitary conveniences to wireless telegraphy, with Woolworth's in between, enormous numbers of things for utility and for pleasure are manufactured which, apart from industrialized methods of production, would be too expensive for most people to buy.

The 'arts and crafts' person says he is quite prepared to do without all the vaunted products of industrialism. The ordinary person, for the supporter of industrialism is now the ordinary person, says he is not prepared to go without motor-cars or wireless but is quite ready to go without artistic pots and pans—besides, he says, what is to hinder him from having the best of both worlds and having mass-produced pots and pans designed by artists to look artistic? This last part of his argument is, of course, stupid; for the most artistic products of mass-production are things which, like the newest locomotives, are as free as possible from any art-nonsense and the most inartistic are things like the stained glass panels which many speculative builders still think it necessary to put in suburban front-doors. And, in passing, it is amusing to notice that those who think art is

a matter of ornament are condemned out of their own mouths; for the houses they call 'artistic' are always the plainest and, in shops, the stuffs called 'art' muslin or 'art' serge are the ones without any pattern on. The natural distaste of the artist for machine-made ornament caused him to demand plain materials; so those materials are now labelled 'art' by the very people who think that art is ornament and that ornament can be produced by machinery.

Nevertheless it is clear that artists and industrialists are arguing at cross purposes. Industrialism has undoubtedly degraded the things formerly made by hand, or, more accurately, it has killed the making of such things altogether (for we may neglect the minute amount now made by 'artist craftsmen') but, on the other hand, industrialism does produce a host of things not otherwise obtainable. It comes back to the question of effective demand. It is not an artistic question at all. The ordinary man to-day makes no effective demand for durable pots and pans or for the beauty that hand-made things alone can have; his demand is for quick transport, bath-rooms, music on tap and a fresh cinema programme every week. And in their own line these things get better and better as the demand for them becomes more and more effective. The stimulation of the demand for painted pictures rather than Medici prints of 'old masters' or for hand-woven cloth instead of Manchester goods is not furthered, even if we agree that it should be furthered, by the art-nonsense according to which machine-

made things are not works of art and cannot possibly be good in their kind.

Vanum est vobis ante lucem surgere—meanwhile I am all for concrete and iron buildings which not only look like such but proudly proclaim the fact. Churches as well as factories should so be built. They are beginning to do it in France and Germany. The Church especially should set the fashion for the Faith is, of all things, most impatient of foolishness and fraud.

Another fertile field for the production of art-nonsense is the critical distinction between art and 'fine' art—between art and Art. The distinction is a real one, as defining the difference between those things which minister to physical convenience merely and those which are made deliberately to minister to the mind's delight. But though, at one end of the scale, music and painting and sculpture and letters clearly come in the category of 'fine' arts and, at the other end, brick-laying and dentistry and motor-car manufacture seem as clearly to come in the category of mere art, or, as they might be called, 'the servile arts,' there is not only a large number of things made which are difficult to place definitely in either category but, and this is the fertile field for art-nonsense, things which are labelled 'fine' art are often made in the same spirit and with the same intention as things labelled servile art, and vice versa. Thus a postage stamp has for its reason of being not the mind's delight but a purely physical convenience, and an inscription on a tombstone or a chair may often minister to the mind's

delight more definitely and consciously than the pictorial and therefore presumably 'fine' art of posters. It is clear that any art may become 'fine' and any fine art may become 'servile.' It would be better if, in the ordinary way, we dropped the distinction altogether and criticized each thing on its merits. We should thus perhaps get the picture painters and sculptors, musicians, architects and men of letters off their pedestals and, on the other hand, raise the engineers and crossing-sweepers and dentists to a higher level of self-respect. Anyway, we should avoid the present absurdity of some people calling themselves 'artists' merely because they paint pictures, and of others saying they are 'interested in art' merely because they go to picture exhibitions.

Yet another perennial source of art-nonsense is 'the nude,' and it is curious to notice that both poles of the civilized world are supposed to be privileged—to have the advantage of private law. Those who practise medicine and surgery—serving a purely physical purpose—at one end and painters and sculptors—serving a purely mental purpose—at the other are both supposed to be superior to the common prejudice against nakedness. We may guess that there is a good deal of moral nonsense talked in defence of medical studies; certainly there is a lot of art-nonsense talked about 'life' study. In both spheres things are condoned and condemned in a spirit of sheer prejudice. Here we are only concerned with the art business and we may observe that it is not only the critics and the general public

but also painters and sculptors who make nonsense of the nude. The Charlies of our time may often be heard paraphrasing Bernard Shaw's Charlie in 'Major Barbara': "There's a certain amount of tosh in all this 'life' study, but still it's Art and you can't get away from that." As a matter of fact, drawing from the nude is not art in that general sense; it is simply a special form of it which has become a fetish. "The proper study of mankind is man," but man is by nature a clothed animal and the insistence on studying him naked is about as reasonable as it would be to insist on the necessity of studying bare trees or shaved horses. The study of naked man and drawings and paintings of the nude are a special form of art—the most delightful and perhaps the most difficult. There is nothing wrong about it except the notion that it is generally necessary to artistic salvation. On the other hand, our aunts are so well served by the police and police-magistrates that they can well afford to leave the moral question alone. Painters and sculptors are probably no more immoral than stockbrokers—those typical supporters of law and order—and are, I hazard, much more inclined, by the nature of their work, to see the sense of the saying "*Dilige Deum, et fac quod vis.*"

I conclude by reiterating the statement that art is making in general and is therefore of paramount importance in human affairs. It is not the merely sentimental business that most people think it, nor is it either simply 'self-expression' or 'the expression of emotion,' as some modern philosophers and critics maintain.

A contemporary theologian has said¹: "To worship God is to foster even the arts and crafts," and though we may well cavil at the word 'even' as implying that the 'arts and crafts' are the last things one would expect to be influenced by religion, one need not fall into the opposite error, so beloved of the nineteenth-century sentimentalist, and wallow in the art-nonsense of those who sought to prove that "in that dear middle age these noodles praise" any monk or priest was both artist and craftsman.

But if we may maintain that art is of paramount importance we must also maintain that it comes within the sphere of the reasonable. A sham-gothic building I was recently shown over contained in its entrance-hall a new electrical switch-board. In reply to the question how I liked the building, I said I liked the switch-board. My friend, a scientist, said he thought that was just the kind of thing I would not like. I said: "Oh, I like anything reasonable," to which he replied: "Oh, that's too abstruse for me." In his view art was not the reasonable and it was shocking to him that any artist should like an electrical switch-board. But though art is reasonable it is not therefore the reasoned. It is intellectual rather than ratiocinative and this fact leads to a host of misunderstandings on both sides. The artist, the maker of things, knowing that he does not go about his work in the manner of an astronomer discovering the planet Neptune, often falls into the error of supposing his

¹ 'The Catholic Church and Philosophy,' by Fr. Vincent McNabb, O.P., p. 81

friends to be right in regarding him as a purely emotional fellow—hence all the art-nonsense about the artistic temperament and the philosophic tosh surrounding the word ‘feeling.’ And if we demand intellect of the artist rather than ratiocination, the artist may also demand it of his customers. His final word may well be “Tastes differ, but not right tastes; and moral notions, but not right moral notions.”

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